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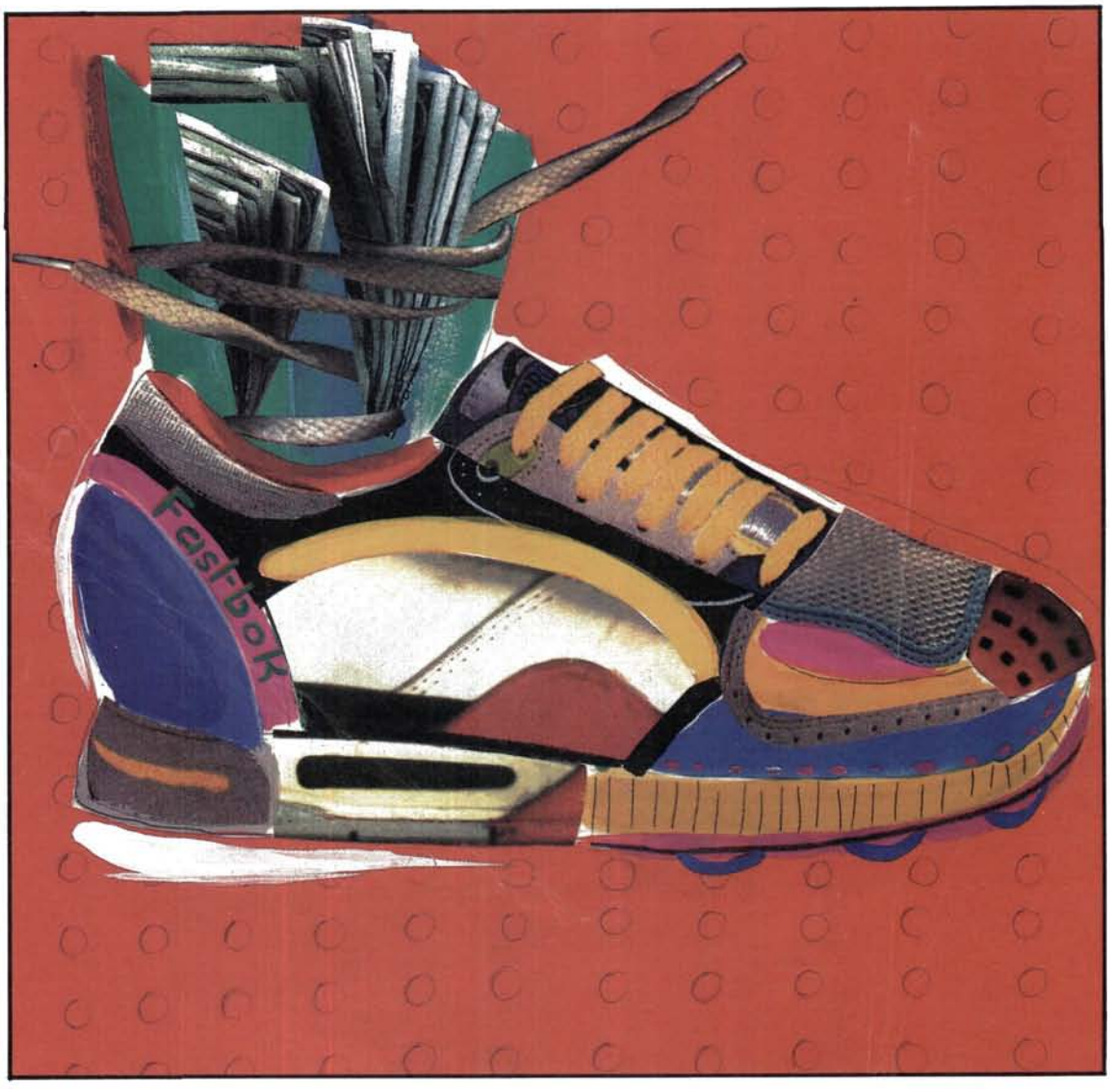

Dave Hill on the new, green spacemen

Robert Waller exposes the myth of the C2 voter

Summer books: Christopher Price on the Guildford Four; Rosalind Coward on Baudrillard

Going for gold

London's marathon is meant to be run for fun. In fact, it's a money spinner for a few men. Duncan Campbell investigates

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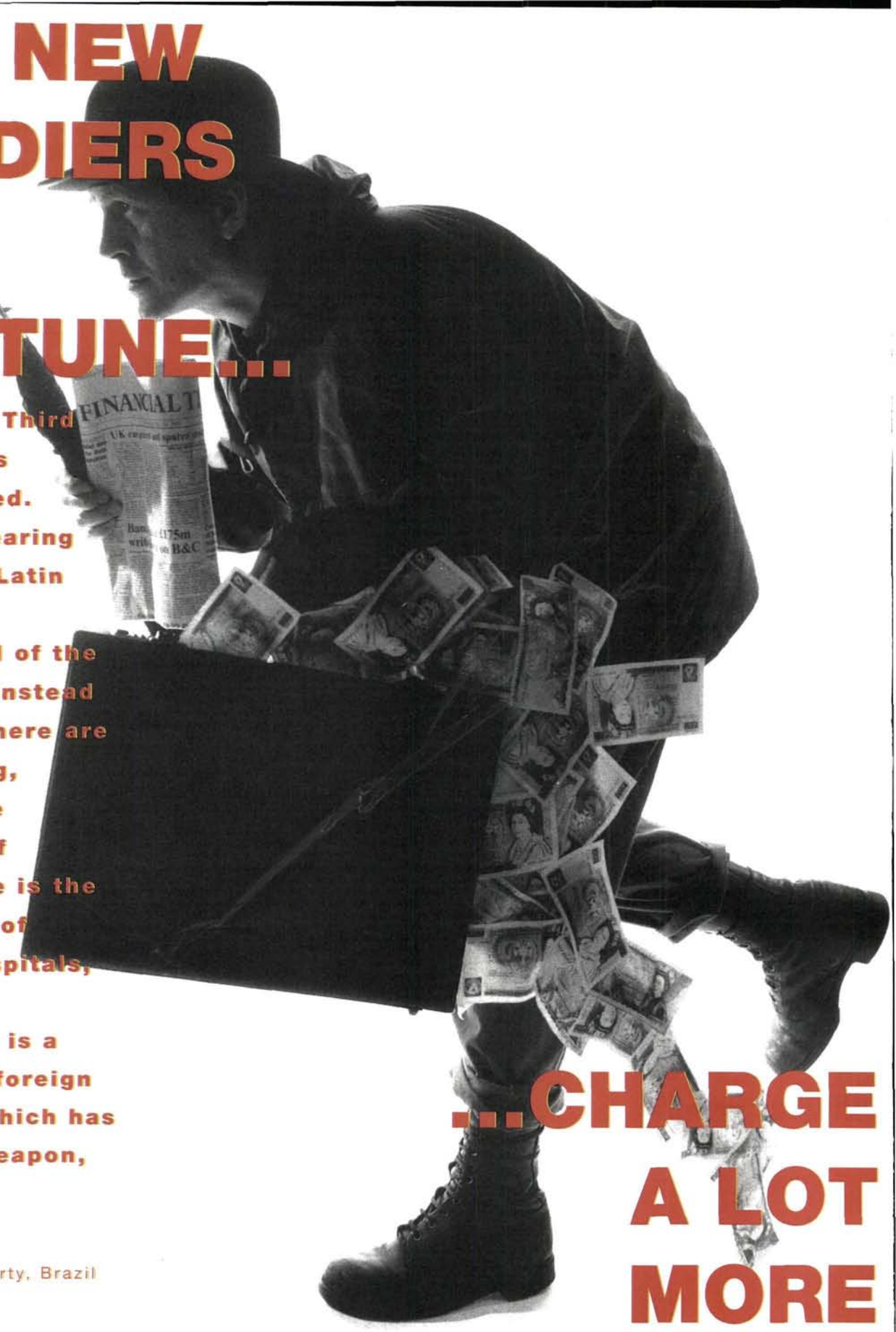
THE NEW SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE...



I tell you the Third World War has already started. This war is tearing down Brazil, Latin America and practically all of the Third World. Instead of soldiers, there are children dying, instead of the destruction of bridges, there is the tearing down of factories, hospitals, and entire economies. It is a war over the foreign debt, a war which has as its main weapon, interest.

Luis de Silva

Leader, Workers Party, Brazil

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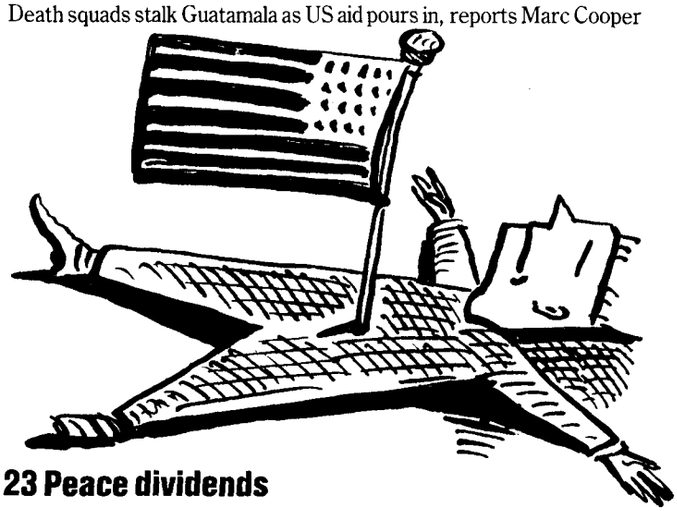

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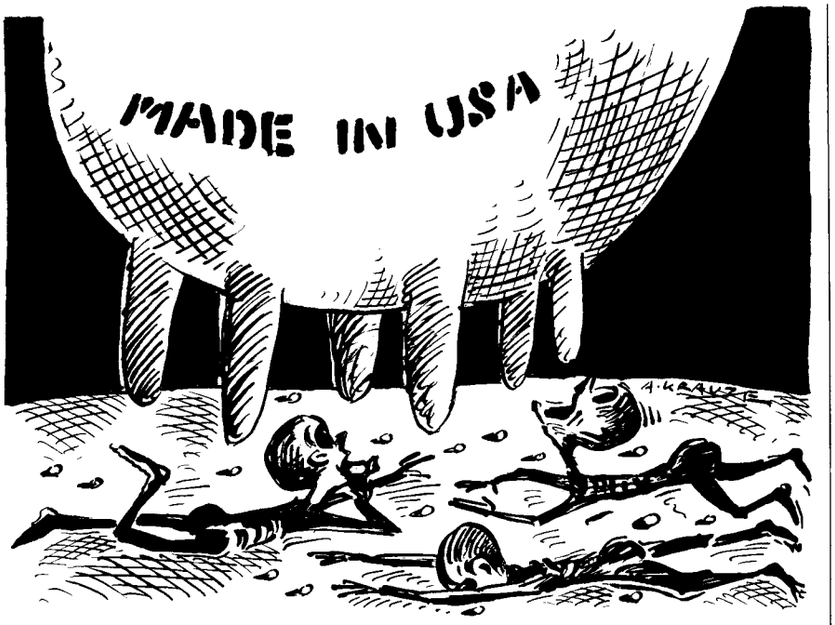
Sacred cows

President Bush wants to abolish farm subsidies. He deserves all the support that progressive people can give him



Enlightened people in the first world tend to talk about India's sacred cows with an air of resigned tolerance. Yet the most absurd and damaging devotion to the cow is American, and of course it's financial, not religious in spirit: in the US, the average dairy cow receives more in subsidy than half the world's population can earn. The world's richest countries spend £136 billion on farm subsidies, and the worst offenders are the Americans, the EC and Japan.

President Bush's pressure for the abolition of all farm subsidies within ten years is quite hypocritical. The Americans talk of the damage that's done to developing countries, but while they talk like Adam Smith about free trade in farm products, they take for example a Stalinist line on textiles (they're pressing for "global quotas" for textiles, which would freeze production at current levels—a piece of extreme interventionism designed to stop developing countries penetrating the US domestic market any further).

Even so, we should regret that our own market liberal, Mrs Thatcher, has been so deeply involved in a deal at the Group of Seven summit in Houston which will frustrate US pressure for rapid progress. For any move towards a more liberal policy will have real benefits for the poor, both as producers in the third world and as consumers in the first.

The rich world is locked into a pattern of chronic overproduction, stimulated by wasteful subsidies—in the European case, by high prices fixed under the Common Agricultural Policy. About a third of EC farm income flows from Brussels policies, or additional cash from member countries. The weekly cost of CAP for, say, a family of four is just over £6 a week in taxes and just under £8 in food prices.

The European Commission argues that the food mountains caused by high prices have been eradicated. Mrs Thatcher likes to claim credit for this. But it is not true. The surpluses are being exported en masse with subsidies to bring their prices down to world levels. These subsidies nearly doubled between 1986 and 1988 for cereals and between 1988 and 1989 for beef. The EC exports alone drive down world food prices by 16 per cent. The Americans are dumping their excess production every bit as aggressively. Between them, Europe and the US are systematically driving third world producers out of business.

The rows over farm subsidies began at the last Gatt conference in 1988, which collapsed in disagreement. In spring 1989, agreement was reached on "substantial progressive reductions in agricultural support and protection"; but since then stalemate has been reinstalled, most recently at the OECD talks in Paris in May. If the stitched-up Houston package unravels at the Gatt conference in December, a "subsidy war" could develop, and the casualties will be the poporer countries, as prices are driven even lower.

Bush is freer to act than his European counterparts because the mechanised American farmers are now too few in number to constitute a powerful lobby; and as he is increasingly boxed-in on his pledge not to raise taxes, Bush is under domestic pressure to make tax savings on farm subsidies. European farmers are more numerous and better organised. CAP now eats up two thirds of the Commission's budget—but that budget is relatively free of the kind of scrutiny which, say, our NHS budget has to undergo. It is a constellation of different product regimes transacted in funny money (green currencies and green Ecu) and in nine languages. But make no mistake: it remains a Frankenstein's monster which must be brought under control.

Given the strong internal presssures, the best way forward is probably through international negotiations like Gatt. Public concern about BSE and the other effects of intensive farming could actually do a lot of good too, for shifts towards less intensive farming could lead to smaller surpluses and less dumping on world food markets. But there's a lot to be said for good old-fashioned political resolve. Sweden, for example, traditionally one of the world's most protectionist states, has reformed its agricultural policy, phasing out its cereal and milk regimes by reducing price and export subsidies and introducing environmental improvement programmes. (But even they will maintain tariff walls until Gatt brings them down.)

At one point, it looked as though Labour had ambitions to do a Sweden. The policy review committed the party to oppose export subsidies when they come to office. But *Looking to the Future*, which has a lot to say about third world aid, is now silent on export subsidies. Mrs Thatcher has dumped her principles in Houston. It is to be hoped Labour haven't shredded theirs in Walworth Road.

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Rights issues

Amnesty International published its annual report on Wednesday. Bedside reading it's not: the catalogue of human rights abuse, from almost every country of the world, makes for a depressing and repetitive document. But in a week when the "developed" world started to think about relaxing the sanctions imposed against China after the Tiananmen massacre, copies of the report ought to be air-freighted to every world leader at the Houston summit.

Sometimes it seems as if all that ever changes in the field of human rights are the names of the victims (or, in the case of Burma, which now goes by the alias of "Myanmar", the name of the villain). But that impression is false. The revolutions in eastern Europe, and the thaw in the Soviet Union, mean that the traditional picture of the lonely prisoner of conscience, incarcerated for his or her beliefs, is slowly being replaced by something even more disturbing. Amnesty highlights the growing suppression, or even genocide, of ethnic and nationalist groups.

There's a distinction to be drawn between human rights, founded largely on Christianity and liberal individualism, and humanitarian rights, which deal with rights of populations and peoples. A United Nations independent commission on international humanitarian issues, in a report published two years ago, argued that "sometimes relatively minor acts of violence attract more publicity than armed conflicts which claim tens of thousands of lives... it is regrettable that violations of humanitarian law do not attract as much attention as violations of human rights."

Although the perpetrators of the worst outrages against humanitarian norms are in the third world, the developed world is slow to recognise the problem. For example, few western European nations have ratified the UN 1977 protocols on the protection of civilians in war-time, or the 1954 convention on statelessness. As even Albania appears to edge towards democracy, China may soon be one of the few countries left which crushes ideological dissent *per se*. But the need for a new international humanitarian ethic will become stronger than ever.

Backing off the Bill

Only weeks ago, the Labour Party let it be known that it was going to commit itself to incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into British law. That came as a surprise. We, for example, while confident that Labour would ultimately adopt the democratic agenda, had always assumed that hostility towards the idea of a Bill of Rights was so strong within the party and trade unions that electoral reform would come first, and incorporation a very poor second.

That hostility is now having its effects in the inner counsels of the party. The proposal for incorporation failed to make last month's national executive meeting, and may not get on this month's agenda. When it does, it will go through. But as *Labour Research* recently showed, most trade unions remain against the proposal, and so do many influential parliamentarians, like Clare Short MP, who wrote a vigorously hostile letter to the *NSS* last week. The TUC is now conducting a review of trade union opinion on the issue.

It is important to recognise that the objections are perfectly respectable. In part, they reflect an attachment to the idea of collective rights. In part, they reflect memories of the last time when prominent Labour MPs and members, most of whom later defected to form the SDP, promoted the idea of incorporation as a measure to deal with what they saw as the greatest danger to individual rights and British democracy itself—trade unionism.

But at their core is fear of what damage a reactionary judiciary, further empowered by incorporation, might do to a reforming Labour government—and an equally strong fear that neither that potential government nor Charter 88 are sufficiently committed to reform of the judiciary. Perhaps the best outcome of the present conflict would be for opponents and supporters of incorporation to work together on proposals to make that reform a real prospect.

Tale of a tub

Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. Instead, why not choose a whisper-quiet push-button flush mechanism with fittings in soft peach or striking avocado? Those gold-plated taps and sunken tubs in Arthur Scargill's bathroom (courtesy of the International Miners' Organisation) put him in some pretty dodgy company. As well as consulting his lawyers over the fast-unravelling "web" of secret loans fixed during the coal dispute, the NUM president should have had a word with his interior decorator. In the media's repertoire of pictorial nudges and winks, fancy sanitation means "feminine" flightiness and vanity—even corruption. So the humbled king of the pits joins Elena Ceausescu and the Duchess of York in the bracket of soapsud sybarites. That Paul Gascoigne would surely never go *near* a jacuzzi. As for Vaclav Havel, he no doubt retires to a clean well-lit place chastely furnished in snowy porcelain.

With the shame of Scargill's bathtime luxury, the miners' image turns full circle. Once, they were filthy of skin and pure of heart: outside black, inside white. Their public cleansing proved them fit to inherit the earth they burrowed in. The comradeship of the pit-head baths; the fireside tin-tub with a loofah-wielding wife: these were the rituals that sustained a host of plays and films. Now, a million grimy toilers have shrunk in the public eye to a well-paid, well-groomed interest group a few tens of thousands strong, led by a perfumed dandy with dark secrets: outside white, inside black. Those tabloids photos from *chez* Scargill tell their own subliminal story. As the chief soaks and scrubs, the shit hits the fan.

Talking dirty

The government is angered by a report from Brussels accusing Britain of having large numbers of filthy beaches, covered in untreated sewage and litter, which *still* don't measure up to the European Commission's 1975 Bathing Water Directive. Britain, according to these statistics, comes bottom of the list with only 67 per cent of our designated beaches reaching the required standard. Ireland is at the top with 98 per cent getting the all clear.

Environment minister David Trippier is furious because he says these are old figures from 1988. The 1989 figures, he adds, were sent to the EC six months ago. They show that we have got much better: 76 per cent of our beaches have now passed the EC test and Trippier feels Britain is being unfairly victimised by Brussels.

If Trippier were honest, he would have admitted that Britain's rules are among the laxest in the community, and that we designate far fewer beaches than our neighbours. But even ignoring these facts, where does that leave Britain on the league table? Still bottom, actually.

Fourth in the World Cup, with an award for fair play. English football back in Europe. Bobby Robson retired in semi-glory. Let's be the first to welcome the new England manager, Graham Taylor. And let's be the first to say: "TAYLOR MUST GO!"

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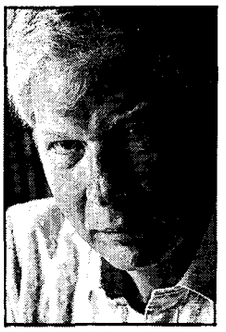
POLITICAL COLUMN

Football factors

The World Cup stirred more national emotion than any event since the Falklands war



R W Johnson

For anyone interested in the way British culture works, it is fairly well impossible to pass over without comment the great psychic drama of the World Cup. There is no doubt that this event stirred greater collective emotion than, say, the last election. At times one was irresistibly reminded of the Falklands war. The same absurd beginnings, attended by the same deep misgiving, cynicism and a self-protective jeering. Then, a slowly creeping conviction as Our Boys moved towards a decisive battle, a conviction that we are a naval race in the way nobody else is, that soccer is our game in a way unsurpassed even in Italy. Sure, they'll pay higher transfer fees, go for more hype, but the game goes back further, deeper into our national culture than it does in theirs.

The *Sun* (of course) instinctively caught the comparison: as soon as we got to the quarter-finals it began to recollect how only cheating enabled "the Argies" to beat us last time, just as only a sneak attack had ever got them into Port Stanley in the first place. This was even banalised into such sentences as "the Argy keeper brought off a great save". God knows what Goose Green heroics the *Sun* would have sunk to had we beaten the Germans and faced Argentina in the final. We speak, after all, of a newspaper which doubts if its readers can cope with the notion of a competent Egyptian soccer team; or more precisely, doubts that its readers *want* to cope with that: the Egypt-Ireland goalless draw was headlined "Charlton's Heroes Stymied by Camel Men".

The "Charlton's Heroes" line revealed several other things. First is the remarkable fact that as soon as the association would cast some reflected glory upon us, we are suddenly only too happy to count the Irish as British again, as if the whole of the last century's history had not occurred. There was, too, the oddly English glorying in Charlton's dour, boorish character, the chuckles of delighted contentment when the great man showed his disdain for foreigners, or boasted that if he'd been fouled by so-and-so, "I'd have chinned him".

It was, if you think about it, all of a piece with the weird celebration of that dour and charmless egocentric, Geoffrey Boycott. Only something passing strange within us can explain this special sympathy for dogged xenophobics. We take pleasure in the opinionated parochialism of such figures because we like their sheer certainty, their unbothered, unmannered belief in the provincial values of an older England.

The other interesting fact is that when Charlton applied for the England managership, the FA didn't even bother to reply. Symbolically, it is one of the most important jobs in the country, the target for a thousand times more criticism and discussion than the chairmanship of even our largest companies. This alone means that it cannot escape the assumptions about class which predominate when important symbolic business has to be done.

Ideally, of course, the managership would go to a Ted Dexter figure, someone who made his mark managing, say, Corinthian Casuals in his spare time. Failing that, the manager must at least be (a) English and (b) a gent or (c) anyway not an oik. The fans are instinctively meritocratic and just want a proven winner: a Shankly, Clough, or Paisley; a Charlton, Souness or Dalglish. Hence the eternal controversy, for all the above are either non-English or oiks or both. This is how we ended up with Robson, a nice man who did a fair job but who was never a winner. It's also why Jack Charlton got the brush-off. No doubt, his brother, gentleman Bobby, with no management record to speak of, would have been taken more seriously.

God knows what Goose Green heroics the "Sun" would have sunk to had we faced Argentina in the final

For us, uniquely, this was not the end of the matter. Big Jack might not be gent enough to manage England but he could always go off and manage one of the England Reserve teams, in this case one called Ireland. For while everybody else had one team to cheer for, we had three (and might have had five had the other reserve teams, Wales and Northern Ireland, scraped through). It is truly remarkable that we are still allowed to get away with this. If non-independent countries were generally allowed to enter the competition, the likes of Bavaria, Russia or the Ukraine would quickly shoulder out these reserve teams of ours. As it is, the shunting out under humiliating circumstances of the reserve team called Scotland is now a ritual part of the Cup. At least this time it was achieved without a doping scandal, though whether the Scots play better or worse when drugged is one of the game's more arcane debating points.

There was much celebration of Cameroon's success as heralding Africa's "arrival" in world football, or more specifically, the arrival of sub-Saharan Africa, since for these purposes the previous successes of teams like Morocco and Algeria were deemed not to count because, er, well, you know, they're not black. In one sense this was otiose. The England team included three players of African descent, the US had more, as did the Dutch and the Latin Americans, while the Central American teams seemed to be virtually all black. Had the French or Portuguese qualified there would have been more black faces, but even without them you could have picked an all-black team able to take on anyone. Indeed, if one thinks back to players like Pele and Eusebio, this may have been true for some time.

As for the football itself, well; it was mainly pretty dull stuff. It's clear that something fairly drastic is going to have to be done to change the game, which has now got into much the same state that military tactics had by 1914, with the defensive enjoying a one-sided advantage. The result is endless draws, 1-0 wins, extra time and penalty shoot-outs. With both semi-finals being decided on penalties—it would have been as fair to toss a coin—even the credibility of the finalists themselves was undermined.

As in all other sports, the players have got fitter, stronger, and better organised, so it's not surprising that the rules need changing. Altering the off-side rule is a start, but we may have to widen the goals too. On the other hand, by far the best game, Holland *vs* West Germany, was played with ten men a side from the start, which suggest that maybe we should make soccer a ten-a-side game. Perhaps teams should do without a specialist goalkeeper. Which prompts the thought that perhaps I've simply underestimated the Celtic canniness of the Scots. Maybe they're just ahead of their time—after all, they've not fielded a proper goalkeeper for years now.

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TAKING LIBERTIES

Jolyon Jenkins

On Monday the government published new codes of practice under Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). Not, perhaps, an event to set the pulse racing—but stick around. With the May inquiry into the Guildford and Woolwich cases in full swing, you're going to hear a lot more about life inside police stations.

When PACE was going through parliament six years ago, its opponents saw it as a repressive measure giving new powers to the police. In fact the non-statutory codes, governing police conduct, have turned out to be more important than the act itself. This isn't because police officers have been disciplined for breaking them—far from it: hardly any have. No: the real sanction is that the courts have sometimes excluded evidence obtained in breach of the codes. (One Court of Appeal judgment even says that they take precedence over the act, which is, I'm told, legal nonsense.)

Unfortunately, even the prospect of having wrongly-obtained evidence thrown out by judges hasn't been as effective a safeguard of suspects' rights as it might have been. For example, under the code a "custody officer" is supposed to determine in each case whether it's actually necessary to take the person into custody. But criminologist Robert Reiner, researching this, failed to find a single instance of a custody officer saying that custody wasn't necessary. In fact, police at one station got so bored with filling out this section of the form that they asked for a rubber stamp to be made up for them. Reiner isn't a particularly stern critic of the police, but the Association of Chief Police Officers blocked his application to do any more research.

Other research casts the police in a worse light. One of the most fascinating pieces was published last year by the Lord Chancellor's Department. A team led by Andrew Sanders of Birmingham University found the police (some of whom were apparently under the misapprehension that Sanders was from Mothercare) routinely using "ploys" to evade PACE.

For example, suspects are supposed to be informed of their right to see a solicitor. But as one officer told the Birmingham researchers: "Now under PACE, you read them their rights as quickly as you can—hit them with it so quickly they can't take it in—say 'sign here, here and here' and there you are: nothing's changed, we all know that, though you wouldn't get any policeman to admit it to you." (The last 11 words suggest that you can still go a long way in the police without too much intelligence.)

Anecdotal evidence is coming through all the time that the codes are regularly being flouted. The Haldane Society of Labour Lawyers claims that police conduct interviews in the back of a van on the way to the station. In Bristol, lawyers report, officers often wait until the solicitor has left the station before going down to the cells for a second, informal interview.

The new PACE codes tighten up some of the rules slightly, but can they ever be enough? Robert Reiner thinks we're seduced by a myth of the golden age of PC George Dixon. In fact, he says, in the past, police could get away with more, because we expected less of them. Most people who are held in police stations are weak and vulnerable, he says, and no set of rules can alter that fact. Actually, I think there *are* ways to improve matters; and in coming weeks I'll be looking at some of them.

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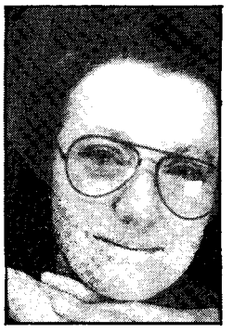
DIARY

A letter, from Edmonton, Canada, has killed off any dream I ever had of being a fit substitute for Sean French, our usual diarist, even for one week. It has become horribly clear to me: I'm just not pretty enough. "I must tell you," says the letter writer, "that I think Sean French combines intelligence, fearless self-examination, stirring and original writing with absolutely wonderful good looks [ah *ha*!], assuming the picture in your publication is not 15 years old! And even then... " I have had three attempts at trying, in a booth, to look 15 years younger and failing miserably. So: stupid, a self-absorbed coward, derivative and dull. This is my destiny.



Vicky Hutchings

As Enamoured of Edmonton will know, Sean's reading matter is invariably intellectual and thought-provoking. I read the *Engineer*, searching out the truth on exciting topics like electricity privatisation, waste disposal and the Severn Barrage. But even the *Engineer* has its moments. Recently it was taken to the High Court for infringing the confidentiality of a private company trying to hide its innermost financial secrets. The journalist almost went to prison for refusing to divulge his source.

The *Engineer* is now busily impugning the honour of Skoda, the Rolls Royce of Czechoslovakia. So desperate was their diarist to fill his pages that on two occasions the column was filled out with items like:

Q: Why does the Skoda have rear-window heating?
A: To keep your hands warm when you have to push it.

Q: What's the difference between a Skoda and a Jehovah's Witness?
A: You can shut the door on a Jehovah's Witness.

Very properly, the *Engineer* is being bombarded with letters from Skoda and its solicitors, insisting that these are libels greater than which cannot be imagined. The *South London Press*, which ran a whole column of Skoda jokes a few weeks ago, has received no letters of complaint and doesn't seem seem to be taking the matter too seriously. Even the Calcutt report—that encyclopaedia of everyone whose feelings and privacy ought to be protected against the press—has absolutely nothing to safeguard us against scurrilous jokes.

Another glaring gap in Calcutt concerns the matter of *airbrushing*. I learn from the *Daily Mail* that "ageing" Stone Bill Wyman is now squiring his sister-in-law to the celebrated nightclub Tramp. "Nicola, 20," said the *Mail*, "refused to discuss her date with her brother-in-law." There was even a picture of the two together, taken by one Alan Grisbrook. But this is odd. I find exactly the same photograph by Grisbrook, this time reproduced in colour, in the *Daily Mirror*. The story here is rather different. The *Mirror* describes how "lonesome" Bill had "tagged along" with Nicola and her boyfriend out on a date. I look again at the photograph and spot a man standing between Wyman and Nicola.

Students of global politics will recall that the Bolshevik revolution started to go sour when Stalin took to airbrushing Trotsky from the official photographs. With this in mind, I rang the *Mail* to ask what had happened to the vanishing man. They explained that it "was to make the picture look better... Because we ran it in black and white, we had to airbrush out the third figure for reproduction purposes. It was so dark and confusing. The *Mirror* ran it in colour, so they were able to leave the figure in."

Just think. If colour photography had existed in 1917, the course of Soviet history might have been entirely different.

I am constantly inundated with information on mad cow disease (BSE), bovine somatotropin (BST), cancer-causing food additives and irradiation. Ploughing through the massive BBC book, *The Silent Revolution*, I have discovered an earlier horror: the Churkey.

It all began when Buxteds worked out it could get huge economies of scale in the turkey business—if only we could be persuaded to eat turkey all year round, not just at Christmas.

So Buxteds got its geneticists to design a much smaller bird the size of a chicken, but "retaining the turkey's higher theatrical value", whatever that means. But the project was put on ice when it turned out that the bird, ready for the table so quickly, had no time to develop any flavour. (If anything dates the story, that does.)

Buxteds didn't panic. They had long produced a chicken broth, made by rendering down old laying hens, for soup-makers. But a new synthetic chicken flavouring had made their broth obsolete. What could be easier than to inject the tens of thousands of gallons of unwanted chicken soup into the micro-turkey corpses? But, alas for their ingenuity, when the bird was cooked, the soup "separated out into yellowish globules of fat, distressingly diseased in appearance". So back to the drawing board.

Or rather to a doctor's clinic. The top turkey man, as luck would have it, went to have his annual flu jab. The nurse's vaccine gun—a device that shoots vacccine into muscle tissue in a blast of compressed air—caught his eye. It turned out to be a winner: "Vaporised soup shooting through the skin of the bird spread in a mist of flavour through the flesh to produce the ideal marriage of succulence and taste."

The Churkey had a classy launch at the Savoy ... and died without trace. All that genetic engineering, the redesigned vaccine gun, the entrepreneurial flair, the cosy new name, failed to persuade the public to eat it. A good thing too, you might think. But the saga ends on an ominous note: "If the Churkey failed," says the author, "other bright ideas did not." We know.

Next week I shall escape from the eight million people packed into London and fly to Norway where the total population barely tops four million. Eleven years ago, I fell in love with a country that calls a train a "tog" and train-timetables "togtider". In Norway, good is pronounced "goo", snow is pronounced as "sneu", and "I speak a little Norwegian" comes out as "Yea snacker leet Norshk", in the lilting rhythms of the Swedish chef on the Muppets. I worry that I may be racist, but something childish in me has never been able to resist it.

The first time I went, I was appalled by the emptiness. But I always go back. This time I'm walking in the Arctic along the Swedish border. In the evenings, I'll sit by a Jotul stove, eat fishballs and listen to the silence.

ROGER WODDIS

Last resort

Military establishments in the Soviet Union, the US and Britain have expressed anger at the arms cuts now proposed by both East and West

In some secluded hideaway,
  Remote from prying eyes,
Three mad bemedalled generals
  With brains of massive size
Stared dumbly at the dreadful news,
  And felt their hackles rise.

One chewed the end of his cigar,
  And one began to sweat,
The third remarked, "Of all the foes
  That we've confronted yet,
The loss of status, power and pay
  Remains the greatest threat."

The thought of peace disturbed them all
  And filled them with alarm:
"Let's stage an international coup—
  We're done if they disarm."
But that's the kind of talk you hear
  In any funny farm.

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Going for gold

The London Marathon, one of the world's largest mass sports events, is portrayed as a fun and fundraising event for sport and people alike. Duncan Campbell investigates

On Monday, the governors of London Marathon Ltd, a registered charity founded by the GLC in 1980 to provide recreation and sports facilities in London, meet to give their verdict on a leadership struggle at the top of the race organisation.

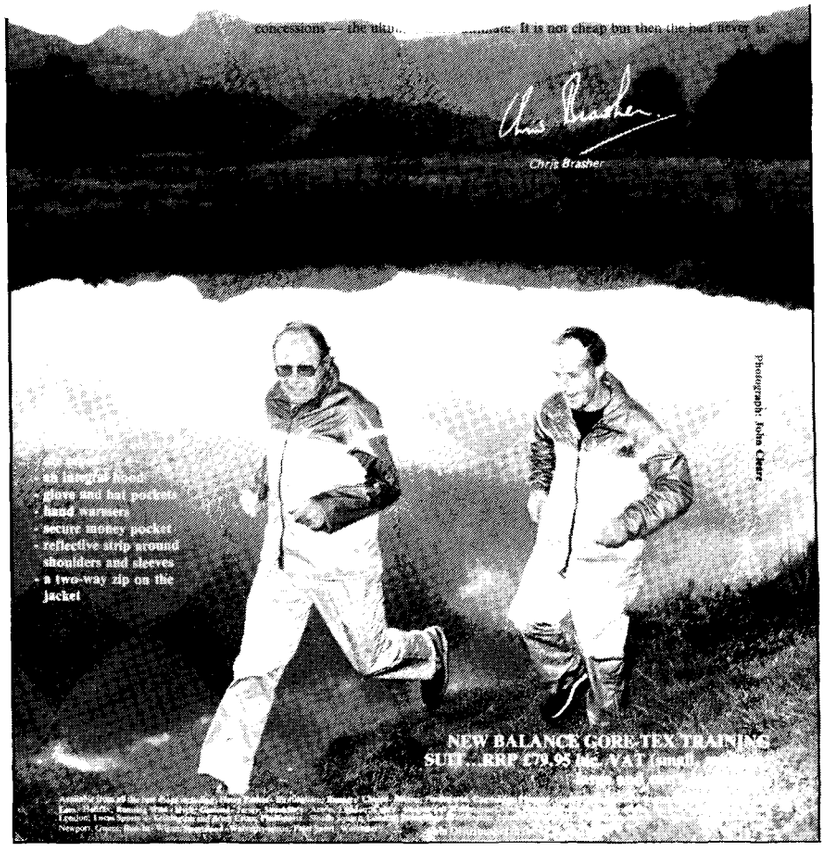
The growing row has helped bring to light allegations of deliberate concealment of profits, improper financial payments, lavish hand-outs to athletes and their agents, and reticence about "honoraria" paid to officials like the ex-Olympic runner, Chris Brasher, now 62, founder and race director of the marathon. For British athletics, the battle is of great significance, especially since next year, the 1991 London Marathon will incorporate the World Marathon Cup. The row is the culmination of a ten-year long history of dissatisfaction with Brasher's stewardship.

The marathon has two aims—to be a mass participation fun run, supporting and supported by public bodies; and to be an elite, commercial athletics event. The two purposes do not sit easily together. Nor is the British athletics world comfortable with the obvious conflicts of interest that face Brasher and marathon course director John Disley.

Disley, like Brasher an athletics star of the 1950s, partners him in the business and sporting interests which have made both men extremely wealthy. This month's row has unearthed a new mystery: for what purpose, in 1984, did Brasher and Disley set up another London Marathon trading company alongside the marathon's recognised commercial operating company. The present operating company, London Marathon (1985) Ltd, is run by Brasher and Disley jointly together with nominees of the Amateur Athletics Association. Yet the marathon organisation continued until March 1990 to use stationery and issue contracts quoting the first (and dissolved) company's number, 1821313. Brasher has yet to offer a satisfactory explanation as to why the current London Marathon (1985) Ltd is the second company to bear this name.

The actual issue before the governors is whether they should uphold Brasher's decision this May to sack David Griffiths, the assistant race director. Griffiths, formerly chief executive of Wembley Stadium, is the latest in a series of officials to choose to leave or to be told to go. In the last year alone, Brasher has parted company with Griffiths's predecessor, former athletics star Dave Bedford, and three other officials. The former press officer, Mike Butcher, who left in January after a row with Brasher, says that he is a truculent and abrasive man.

Brasher and Disley (a "yes-man," says Butcher) sacked Griffiths after only seven months on the grounds that "the relationship between yourself and the London Marathon team is not working". Griffiths, in an unparalleled challenge to Brasher's domination of the marathon, has exercised a right of appeal to the governors.


Chris Brasher
- glove and hat pockets
- hand warmers
- secure money pocket
- reflective strip around shoulders and sleeves
- a two-way zip on the jacket
Photograph: John Cleare
NEW BALANCE GORE-TEX TRAINING

Going for gold: Chris Brasher shows off "the ultimate training suit" in a company advertisement

According to one of Britain's leading athletics writers, "It's been Chris Brasher's Marathon, not the London Marathon." The obvious conflict between Brasher's commercial interests and his role as race director has been well-known since 1983, when I revealed in the *New Statesman* how Brasher and Disley had involved the marathon in the promotion of Fleetfoot, their jointly-owned running shoe company. In 1983, Brasher and Disley also misled the public and press about the fact that they were paid substantial fees for helping organise the marathon. Brasher persistently attempted to portray himself as an unpaid "volunteer".

Seven years later, Brasher is still reluctant to admit that he gets money from the race. Brasher eventually admitted last week that he will be paid £10,000 for the 1990 marathon. Payments by the marathon to his and Disley's consultancy company in recent years have generally exceeded £25,000. The total "honoraria" budget for 1991 is £75,000.

Brasher told us that "the marathon has to be run on a

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shoestring in order that we maintain and enhance its international reputation and provide as much money as possible to improve recreational facilities in London." This view of marathon finances is utterly misleading. Most of the marathon cash is spent on top athletes and their agents, not handed out for recreational facilities in London.

Every year, the surplus made by the marathon operating company, London Marathon (1985) Ltd, is handed to its parent charity, London Marathon Ltd, after taxes and expenses have been paid. The charity's governors then decide which London boroughs should get these profits for local sports facilities. But the dual purpose of the marathon creates a direct conflict between Brasher's desire to have generous expense accounts available to woo, invite and entertain athletes and sports businessmen, and the marathon's public purpose—to raise money for sport in London.

In 1988, because of this conflict, the amount of money paid to the parent charity was secretly reduced. The surplus earned that year was £235,597, accountant Peter Taylor told an executive committee meeting on 25 October 1988. Mary Smith, the administrative director, says Brasher thought this surplus was "too much" to pass on to charity. He wanted £50,000 set aside to help promote his bid to host the World Marathon Cup. A further £30,000, owed to the marathon by overseas tours organisers the Keith Prowse group, was to be put aside to pay for air fares to be bought from that group.

Brasher's instructions were not a breach of auditing procedures, but they were given without the governors' approval. The surplus now shown in the audited accounts for 1988 is £150,327. Mary Smith, who took minutes at this and at a second meeting of directors, says that Brasher and Disley's alterations were intended to be concealed from the governors; "they didn't want to show too big a surplus, they wanted money carried forward. They did not tell the governors." Sir James Swaffield, chairman of the governors, said this week that he had not been informed about the adjustments.

Peter Nichols, the international race director and the *Observer*'s athletics correspondent, this week claimed on behalf of Chris Brasher that no such event had occurred. This is not true. We have in our possession clear documentary evidence that the account we have given is accurate.

In 1988 the amount of money paid to the parent charity was secretly reduced. The surplus that year was £235,597. Brasher thought this was "too much" to pass on to charity

Runners are equally in the dark about aspects of marathon finance. Would-be entrants who are not among the lucky 30,000 or so offered places are always invited to offer the refundable part of their entrance fee as a bequest to "our fund to aid British sport". Many unsuccessful applicants agree to this. The marathon organisers are embarrassed by the fact that the bequests made by failed applicants have frequently formed most or all of the money actually passed on to charity. For example, in 1987, the actual surplus from marathon operations (net of bequests) was only £613. The same year, athletes and agents were paid appearance fees of £295,936. The directors' and officials' consultancy companies were also paid fees of £25,833. Brasher and Disley's consultancy company is Edanton Consultants Ltd, which is controlled by and pays salaries to their wives.

Additional research by Nigel Townson and Alex Holmes

Brasher and Disley are not alone in being well rewarded for their part in the marathon. Nichols admits that more than half the 1990 marathon's income of about £1.6 million went to pay for the procurement of international star athletes. Most of this—$1 million—was given directly to athletes. Most of the rest was lavished on the athletes and their agents, sometimes in the form of extra cash or "per diem" hand-outs, sometimes as generous, all expenses-paid hospitality.

Not only athletes benefit from Brasher's generosity. Last year he, Griffiths and Nichols hosted a round trip, costing at least £4,000, for Australian athletics agent Steve Smith and his wife. Nichols even obtained front-row tickets to *Phantom of the Opera* for the Smiths. Smith is the agent of the leading marathon runner, Steve Moneghetti—who didn't run the 1990 marathon. Nor is Moneghetti likely to run in the 1991 London Marathon, says Smith. Nichols justified the hospitality, claiming "Moneghetti is very marketable."

Such high payments for athletes and agents are new to marathon running. They follow changes in international athletics regulations which now allow marathon runners to receive both appearance fees and finish money, and to pay them into personal "trust funds". Top athletes now command six-figure sums. This year, for example, Kenyan champion Douglas Wakihuri was offered $160,000—but didn't come. The world record holder, Ethiopian Belayneh Dinsamo, was paid $100,000 to start and, despite having been injured, came and ran. He couldn't finish, and dropped out before half-way. He still got his $100,000.

The 1990 account of planned pay-outs to athletes reads like a price list of the running trade. But widely varying payments may be offered to athletes of similar experience. For example, Steve Jones, a former London Marathon winner (1985) was priced at $80,000, with Hugh Jones, another winner at $18,000. Mike Gratton (1983) was paid only $2,000. 1990's actual winner, Alistair Hutton, got a mere $3,000. Nichols says he is not embarrassed by such figures; "the elite race is part of a marketing system in athletics. It has become a very rich sport."

True. Yet the London Marathon is still presented as a largely voluntary enterprise for the good of sport in London. That's why Brasher insists that it's run "on a shoe string". The marathon team's generosity towards a select few—and the rewards they too receive—might surprise ordinary runners, as well as the members of the public who help on the day and on whose goodwill the organisation depends.

Our investigation has also uncovered questionable financial transactions within the marathon. In April, David Golton, the newly-appointed accountant and treasurer, warned Brasher of his concern about the many cash payments made as renumeration, expenses or "per diem" allowances to temporary staff.

In particular, Golton found evidence that Sol N'jie, the finish coordinator, had received unexplained payments from contractors of more than £4,500 in 1988 and 1989. The payments came to light after Golton noticed a "lack of back-up paperwork" for payments made to Les Lewis, stewarding manager of Wasps, the firm which supplies stewards and construction services at the finish. N'jie authorised payments of £6,320 in 1988 and £6,630 in 1989 for "Wasp Marshalls and Security". But Wasps' services cost less than £2,000 a year to provide. Les Lewis admits this and says that he paid N'jie because he and N'jie had an arrangement to share profits from the deal on a 50/50 basis.

Six weeks after the 1988 marathon, Lewis gave N'jie a cheque for £2,230. N'jie admits receiving this cheque. It was, N'jie also admits, an entirely separate payment from his £2,000 a year "honorarium" for his work as finish coordinator. Lewis and N'jie had a row over N'jie's "retainer" after the 1989 marathon and N'jie had the marathon's £6,630 cheque for stewarding services paid directly to him. He admits that he then deducted more than £2,000 and paid the balance to Lewis. Lewis says he received precisely

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£4,000. N'jie refused to give us any details of what he did with his share of the money in 1988 or 1989; "I haven't been ripping the marathon off ... there is a logical explanation." We'd get this explanation from the marathon organisation.

Nichols, the designated spokesman, told us on Sunday that Sol N'jie's share of the money had been spent on "escorts", who were employed to supervise elite athletes who were taken for drugs tests. The only paid escort he could name, however, was N'jie's wife. Nichols added that "this money [taken by N'jie] was accounted for completely to the satisfaction of Chris Brasher."

He could not explain why neither the marathon's own accounts nor Golton's memorandum of his investigation makes any reference to "escorts". Nor could he explain why the memorandum, written after Golton had received N'jie's explanation of these events, says "it would appear ... that the London Marathon has paid three times the sum which was the actual cost of the provision of these [Wasps'] services, and that one half of the surplus charge has been taken by Sol himself." Nichols said: "Sol N'jie has not accounted properly for how he has spent the money, but it wasn't corrupt. I'm not prepared to discuss it any more."

Athletics correspondents have long noted how hard it is for Brasher and Disley to keep their marathon activities and business interests at arm's length from each other. Most years from 1981 to 1991, the brand of shoes promoted by the London Marathon to journalists and to its unique mailing list of hundreds of thousands of eager applicants has been the brand of shoes sold by Brasher and Disley's own company, Fleetfoot. Fleetfoot's turnover grew from £1.7 million in 1983 to £35 million in 1988. Brasher and Disley have become millionaires many times over. Their share dividends for 1988 alone were £3.25 million.

At the beginning of 1990, Fleetfoot's business was reconstituted as Reebok (UK) Ltd. Brasher is chairman of Reebok (UK) and Disley is a director. The brand of shoes promoted for the 1988, 1989, 1990 and 1991 London marathons is Reebok—the same brand that Brasher has been selling through Fleetfoot since 1985. Before that, from 1981 to 1984, Fleetfoot sold New Balance brand shoes—promoted in the 1981, 1982, and 1983 marathons.

The marathon company's procedure for selecting successful sponsors varies, but generally involves sealed bids. In such cases, sponsors' offers are submitted to and then opened at the same time by an adjudicator.

Retailers and athletic journalists alike say that in fact Brasher's brand of shoes have been promoted in all but one year of the London Marathon. We have been unable to confirm this claim—but London Marathon (1985) Ltd do not deny that it is accurate. On the most recent occasion, a three year contract awarded in 1988 for the 1989-91 marathons, another shoe company put in the highest initial bid. After the bids were opened, however, Brasher decided that the participants should all be invited to rebid, making separate offers for shoes and clothing. When the Reebok rebid arrived, they were found to have won both shoe and clothing sponsorship contracts. Last week we asked Nichols to list the shoe companies which gained each year's sponsorship contract. Astonishingly, he said the London Marathon organisation did not keep records of the contracts.

The fundamental issue before the governors next Monday is not simply Griffiths's dismissal, nor any allegation or counter allegation of mismanagement, incompetence, or impropriety. The question is, whether after ten years of buccaneering management, the London Marathon can now convince the public that it is being run in the interests of sport in London, and not largely for the benefit of a growing band of wealthy athletics businesspeople.

Associated Press

***Going for gold:* Chris Brasher beats the tape to win Olympic gold in the 3,000 metres at Melbourne in 1956. His disqualification for "interference" was overruled on appeal.**

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Behold the econaut

The Space Race is over. Astronaut John and cosmonaut Alexei, both One World enthusiasts, talk to Dave Hill

John Fabian and Alexei Leonov like to pal around. So what if this is the pristine, high-tech astronomy department of the University of Groningen? So what if the eminent Dutch professor is already fraying at the nerve ends? The pals just keep those wisecracks coming: "Hey, what about these Soviets?" goads Fabian as Leonov stops to inspect a brand new Xerox machine located in a corridor between labs. "They're more impressed by a photocopier than a satellite!"

Fabian is a colonel in the United States Airforce. With his long face, lopsided grin and saggy-assed dark brown suit he is irresistibly reminiscent of Yogi Bear. Leonov, his sparring partner, cuts an equally memorable figure. Resplendent in a blue, double-breasted blazer, he is bald and barrel-bellied with a tree-trunk neck and sticking-out ears. He exudes the belligerent good humour of a pit bull puppy and indulges it to the point of recalcitrance. The Dutch professor, tensed up for his welcoming speech, announced the availability of coffee and tea. "And beer?" inquired Leonov, his mock innocence quickly displaced with a rafter-rattling guffaw. Who says the Russians are too serious? Let's hear it for the cold war thaw!

Fabian and Leonov are spacemen. The context of their non-stop knockabout was the 6th Planetary Congress of the Association of Space Explorers, an organisation within which both fill executive roles and whose sole criteria for membership is that you have to have been *up there*, wide-eyed and weightless, beyond the ozone layer. Fabian and Leonov share this privilege with just another 222 fellow Earth-dwellers, over half of whom are now members of the ASE, whose professed philosophical tenor is graphically expressed by this year's Congress theme: "Space Brings People Together".

The first day or so in orbit, we all pointed to our countries. Then we pointed to continents. By the fifth day, we were aware only of one Earth

Togetherness? Back-slapping Soviet-American brotherhood? Whatever happened to the Space Race? Once upon a time, men like Fabian and Leonov would have appeared before the world as the respective virility symbols of two implacably opposed regimes. Now we see the pair of them as partners in badinage and bearers of an ideology that stresses the need for space technology to, as their list of objectives puts it, "help resolve such global issues as energy, natural resources and environmental pollution", for the benefit of all life on planet Earth. Forget politically-encoded titles like "astronaut", "cosmonaut" and (the French way) "spacionaut". The cold war square-up has been ousted by the One World ideal. Behold, the Econaut is here.

So what went right? The ASE was founded by Apollo 9 astronaut Rusty Schweickart with others, including Leonov, from both sides of the iron curtain. Its first congress in October 1985 was attended by 25 space explorers from 13 different countries including Mongolia, Vietnam and France. The fact that this historic gathering might have taken place two years earlier but for political tensions surrounding the shooting down of Korean Airline flight 007 (1983) and the Soviet boycott of the Los Angeles Olympics (1984), indicates how the ASE's viability as an international body has been linked to changes in the superpower climate.

Pre-Gorbachev, it would have been mighty difficult for Soviet cosmonauts to get exit visas to go gladhanding with their American counterparts. It would also have been considered mighty dubious for Americans to reciprocate. Since then, *perestroika* and the US national debt have seen to it that investment in both nations' space programmes has been slashed, making international cooperation on projects not only ethically desirable but financially essential too.

The result is that ASE rhetoric has become increasingly harmonised with international space industry realities. Membership has flourished, as have the prospects for the ASE to become more than just a self-serving association of exotic adventurers, and instead exert real influence over policy makers and, maybe, even capture the world's imagination as an amalgam of individuals who have seen—quite literally *seen*—what they call "the home planet" from a totally new perspective.

It is important not to underestimate the sheer impact of this view from the stars on the elite few to have enjoyed it. Bertalan Farkas, who, as a crewman on the Soyuz 36 rocket that visited the space station Salyut 6, became the first Hungarian in space, describes gazing upon the Earth in this way as "like a second birth". Schweickart has written that "on that small spot...is everything that means anything to you —all of history and poetry and art and death and birth and love..." Sultan Bin Salman Al-Saud of Saudia Arabia, who flew on the shuttle Discovery in 1985 has said of himself and his fellow crew members: "The first day or so in orbit, we all pointed to our countries. The third or fourth day we were pointing to continents. By the fifth day, we were aware only of one Earth."

In any other context, such observations could be discounted as pie-eyed platitudes. But in this case they come not from a bunch of dippy hippies but a selection of the most highly trained, highly skilled aviators and technicians around —a hard-bitten crowd of very smart boys from impeccable military backgrounds. What's more, these are the sentiments space explorers have been expressing for a long

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Mikki Rain

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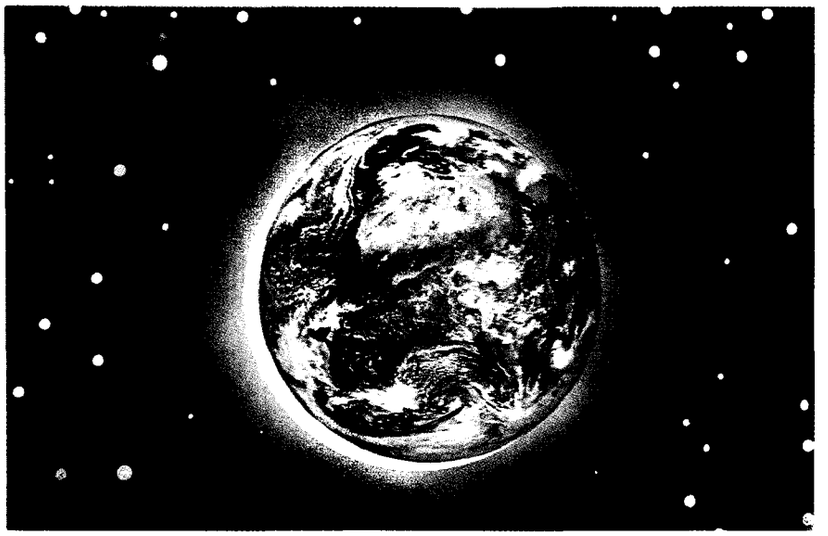
time. Nigel Henbest, the author and astronomy consultant to *New Scientist* magazine, stresses that the ASE's members have always felt that way, both about each other and the planet they have soared above: "I don't think there's a change of attitude there. From the time of the first space flights there was a camaraderie between the cosmonauts and the astronauts. They had pioneered into new and dangerous territory and although they might be trying to break each other's records for being the first in space or the first to the moon, there was always a mutual admiration, rather like fighter pilots during the war, which transcended national differences. When you're up there, you don't see different countries marked in different colours. And many came back with the conviction that we shouldn't be squabbling over the planet Earth."

The environmental crisis, then, offers the space explorer the challenge of playing a different role in the eternal moral drama surrounding "progress" and the well-being of humankind. But there is a lot of legwork to be done before the gungho legacy of the space race is transcended by something greener, more generous and less profligate. For many, space exploration is still a *Boys' Own* fantasy of conquest and adventure, and that includes one or two of the journalists who attended the ASE congress: "Hey, here come the big guys," swooned one chronic wannabe as the spacemen filed into the refectory. "I've heard they can't handle beer," he continued, admiringly, "only liquor!"

Oh, for a phaser on stun! But let us not demean the physical and mental toughness required of those men and women who have circled the Earth in its orbit since 1961. Fabian has done it twice, both times aboard American space shuttles of the type that exploded shortly after lift-off back in '88, killing all those aboard. Leonov has done it twice too, most recently in 1975 as a crewman on Soyuz 19, the Soviet craft that docked with America's Apollo 18. His space debut, though, was way back in 1965—post-Gagarin, pre-moonshot—when he stepped out of Voskhod 2 into the inky blue and took a ten-minute space walk, complete with somersaults. It wasn't all laughs, though. On attempting to re-enter the capsule, Leonov found he couldn't get back in. His space suit had expanded. It took an eight-minute struggle before he got back through the hatch.



But some of the "big guys" have reacted to the space flight experience more phlegmatically than others. There are all kinds of tales of space-age heroes going off their trolleys following their re-acquaintance with this particular lump of terra firma. At least one former astronaut has turned to Bible-thumping, while another of the earliest American high fliers is reputed to earn his living as a beer salesman. Perhaps, though, the saddest story of all is that of John Glenn, America's first man in space—he wanted to become president, poor love.

Most, however, have simply continued to utilise their technical expertise in one field or other. Schweickart went on to become an executive at the North American Space Agency (NASA) HQ in Washington and is now engaged in scientific monitoring of the Antarctic. Another ex-astronaut, Richard Truly, remains an influential figure in the NASA hierarchy.

As for the ebullient Colonel Fabian, he seems, if the pun might be forgiven, thoroughly down to Earth. Anxious, like the ASE membership in general, to avoid saying anything that might be considered controversial, he points out that, economics aside, America and the Soviet Union now pursue different goals in space, the Yanks having their shuttles, the Russkies being more interested in long-stay ventures on space stations. He also dismisses talk of personal conversions through space travel as "romantic", though he does not dissociate himself from the general sense of revelation inherent in looking at the Earth from an immeasurably wider angle than almost everybody else. Suddenly, from seeming like the centre of the universe, the planet is seen—quite literally "seen"—as an oasis in a desert of dead matter and emptiness.

Fabian is also realistic enough to know that politics cannot be excluded from the debate about the use to which space technologies are put: "There is an inherent gain in it," he explains, "but I don't say there's an inherent *good* in it." It would be hard to argue otherwise with research into the Strategic Defence Initiative still going on, albeit at a far more modest pace under George Bush than Cowboy Ron. But Fabian points to the more socially useful applications of space technology, such as communications satellites (which, Nigel Henbest argues, very quickly become cost-effective) and "remote sensing", which can enable deposits of oil, minerals and water to be located under the Earth's surface.

The real science-fiction talk just now is about the prospects for a landing on Mars, possibly manned. This would certainly need to be a multi-national venture. But would such a collaboration really strike a blow for global unity, or simply prefigure a new set of power relations as divisive as the old: on the one hand, those who can exploit space and enjoy its benefits, on the other, those who cannot?

How coherent or potentially influential the ASE's eco-posture really is, it is difficult to gauge. Many of its activities are simply those you would expect of a specialised professional body (the debating agenda largely set with the best-interests-of-our-members in mind) and much energy in committee is expended on acquiring new sources of finance to keep the Association's research activities going. The other problem, ironically enough, is one of communication with the outside world. The decision to invite the press to last week's congress obviously indicates a desire to make the views of space explorers known to a broader public.

But so absurd was the organisation of the congress that it was almost impossible for reporters to commune with the astronauts and cosmonauts in any depth. All but one of the congress sessions were closed to non-ASE members. Add to this the habit of reticence learned by the Soviets—some of whom are now in their sixties—over a pre-*glasnost* lifetime and the determined apoliticism of the rest, and you hardly have a recipe for free and open debate about such pressing questions as the generation of knowledge, who controls it and how it is deployed.

"Space offers an opportunity for all nations," Fabian declares. But with the space race long complete, perhaps the challenge for the ASE is to help ensure that the great valour and astounding technical achievements it demanded can add up to something rather more substantial than just a piece of good TV with a nice Neil Armstrong one-liner about "a giant leap for mankind." ●

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The Daily Telegraph

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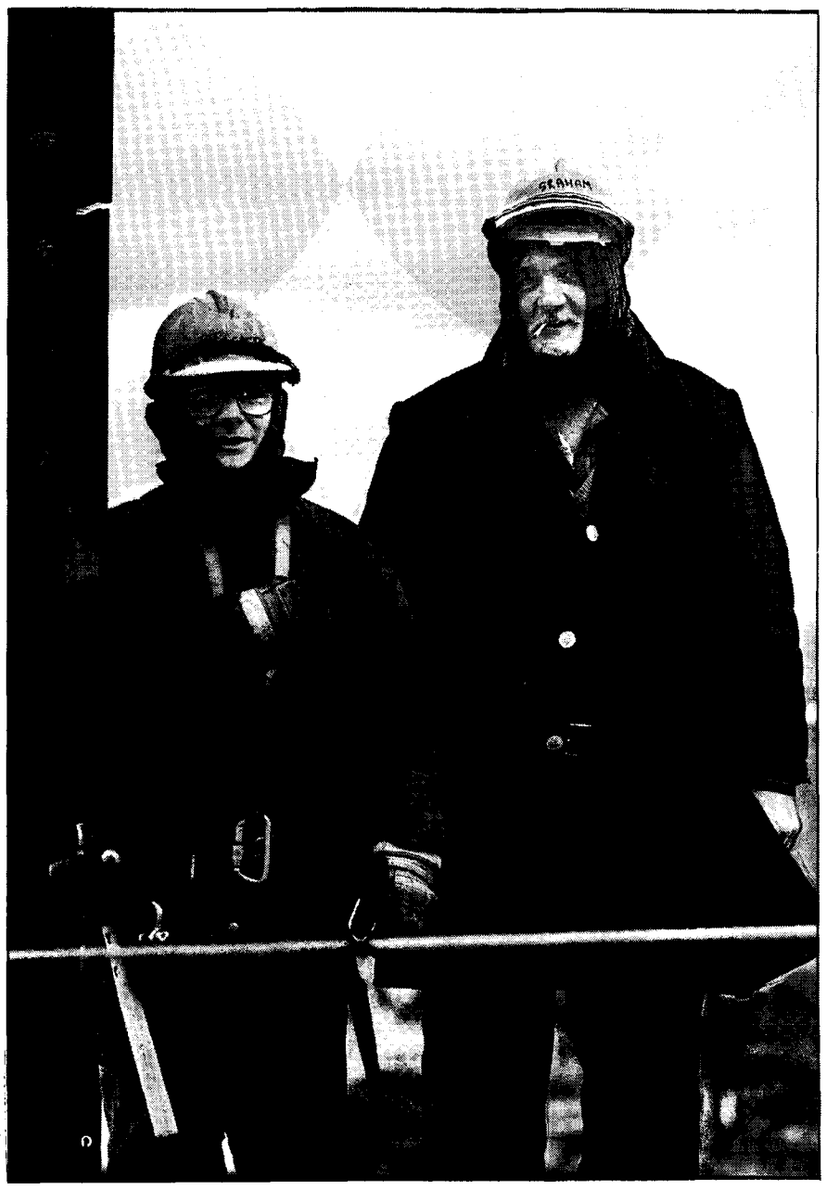
What about the workers?

Skilled workers are supposed to be the key voters who put Mrs Thatcher into power—and who might now evict her. Robert Waller punctures the myth



Steve Pyke/Network

Politicians, journalists, academics and pollsters constantly seek to identify a key group of voters who will decide the next election: first-time voters, mortgage holders, shareholders in newly privatised industries. Or they might try to identify key electoral battlegrounds, like the Midlands marginals (presumably because they're seen as holding the balance between a fictional Labour north and Conservative south).

The most fashionable key voters now are the C2s—skilled manual and supervisory workers. They are supposed to have put Mrs Thatcher into power and are now regarded as the people most likely to turn her out.

A theory of this sort is no mere daydream. It has considerable influence in setting the agenda according to which politicians speak and even occasionally act. It shapes the allocation of resources before and during election campaigns. Few voices now challenge the idea that the C2s are "the all-important swing group that will decide the next election". It's prevalent on television, in the newspapers, and in the inner counsels of the parties. But it is quite wrong.

Are C2s hogging the limelight because they are concentrated in key marginals?

This is not to say that the C2s are not important, or even necessarily that they aren't the single most influential social class. But they are not all-important. They were not solely, or mainly, responsible for Mrs Thatcher's electoral "triumphs" and they will not on their own remove her from power. They should not be the focus of political attention and advertising.

Let's look at a few figures. The ITN/Harris exit poll at the last election gave the Tories a 7 per cent lead over Labour among the C2s (see table in figure). But has there really been a mass defection of these skilled workers to Labour since then? I have aggregated the last nine months of Harris/*Observer* polls to create a sample of 9,234 (which is easily large enough to be broken down into social classes). And the second table shows Labour has had a 14.5 per cent

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lead during this period—a swing of around 13 per cent from Conservative to Labour since 1987. The strongest swing to Labour is indeed among the C2s, at 16.5 per cent. But the DEs—unskilled workers, unemployed people and state beneficiaries—have swung almost as much, by 14.5 per cent. And there are more DEs (30 per cent in the 1989-90 sample) than C2s (28 per cent). All in all, the 16.5 per cent swing within the C2 category represents just over 4.5 per cent of all voters. The 14.5 per cent swing among DEs represents just under 4.5 per cent.

To all intents and purposes, the DE group is equally responsible for the reversal of Mrs Thatcher's lead as the C2s, and indeed the C1s (white-collar workers) are not far behind, accounting for 2.5 per cent of the total 13 per cent swing. Only the ABs, the smallest social group and the most loyal to the Tories, give little cause for worry—here the Labour advance has come predominantly at the expense of the centre parties.

The message is clear. DEs and C1s, as well as C2s, must be won back to the Conservative fold if Mrs Thatcher is to secure a fourth term.

There is little convincing evidence, either, that the C2s played a dominant role in the "Thatcherite triumphs" of the eighties. The figure shows that while the C2s played a leading part in securing Mrs Thatcher's election victories, they were not alone in responding favourably to her party's image and policies. The C2s swung slightly more to the Tories than other social groups in the eighties, and since 1987 they have swung very slightly more away; but there is no real evidence to suggest that they are a significantly more vital "swing" group than, say, the DEs—especially bearing in mind there are slightly more DEs (and certainly there were considerably more at the height of unemployment in the mid-eighties).

Perhaps, then, the C2s are hogging the political limelight because they are concentrated in the key marginal seats—those which, if they changed hands next time, would bring about a change of government? But no, again.

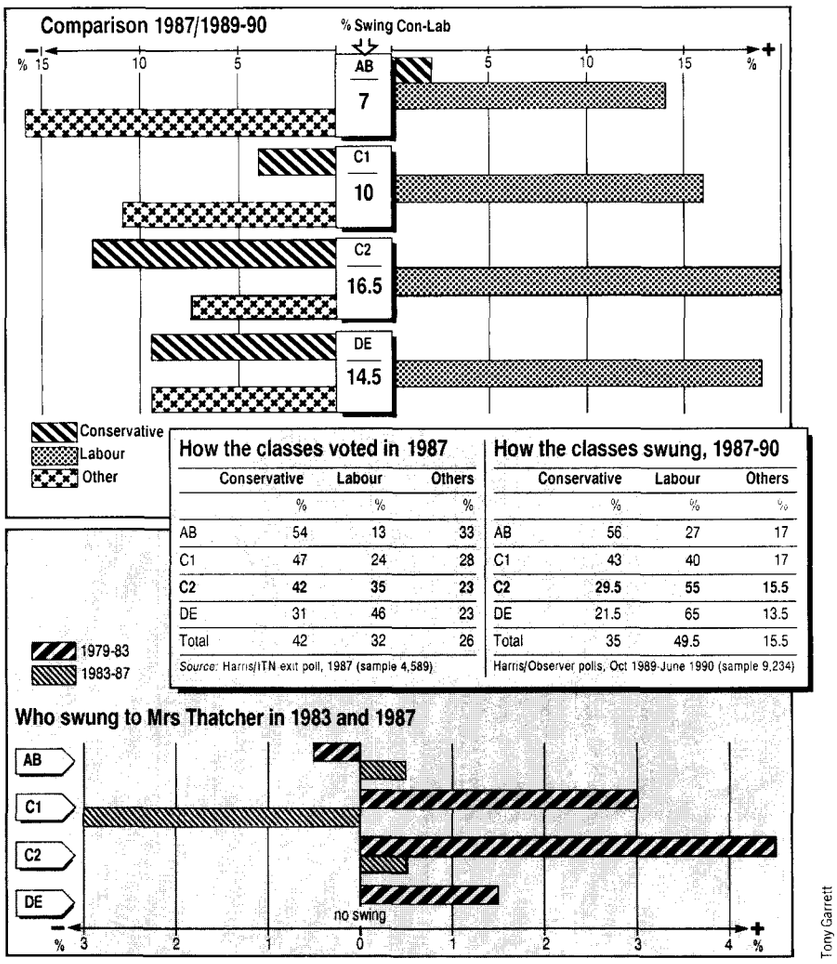
If you take, say, the 25 seats which have the highest proportion of C2s, you won't find the vulnerable Conservative divisions which the opposition parties must win to evict Mrs Thatcher from Downing Street. You will find instead 22 Labour seats, most of which are held with solid majorities. Dennis Skinner's Bolsover heads the list. Of the three Tory seats, two are arguably marginal: Sherwood (Conservative majority 7.7 per cent) and Wolverhampton North East (0.4 per cent). But if you take the ten seats in Britain with fewest skilled workers, you find that half of them are Tory marginals with majorities under 15 per cent: Westminster North, Hampstead and Highgate, Kensington, Richmond and Barnes, and Bristol West.

In fact, an analysis of the 80 most vulnerable Conservative seats reveals that they have exactly the same level of skilled manual workers as the country as a whole. Indeed, in the single region in which most Conservative marginals are to be found—Greater London—there is a marked absence of skilled manual workers in general and C2s in particular, due to the prevalence of service industry in the capital. In London, C1s and DEs are more crucial groups; and there are 21 Conservative seats there that Labour must win to form a government.

The fact is that Mrs Thatcher came into power on the basis of a positive swing on the part of all classes and almost every region, and it will take an equally broad movement to remove her. Labour cannot afford narrowly to target any single social group. A campaign directed solely at C2s might catch other crucial groups too—but then it would have worked by accident, having been based on a false philosophy.

All this seems blindingly obvious to me. Who could seriously think that any group comprising less than 30 per cent of the electorate can be all-important? But the popularity and widespread acceptance of the C2 myth is explicable.

How much do the C2s matter?



How the classes voted in 1987

	Conservative	Labour	Others
	%	%	%
AB	54	13	33
C1	47	24	28
C2	42	35	23
DE	31	46	23
Total	42	32	26

Source: Harris/ITN exit poll, 1987 (sample 4,589)

How the classes swung, 1987-90

	Conservative	Labour	Others
	%	%	%
AB	56	27	17
C1	43	40	17
C2	29.5	55	15.5
DE	21.5	65	13.5
Total	35	49.5	15.5

Harris/Observer polls, Oct 1989-June 1990 (sample 9,234)

Tony Garrett

Journalists like to find a new "angle", a "new" revelation, to enliven political debate. Advertising men and women live by targeting; in many branches of consumer marketing, the identification of a narrow group which can be persuaded to part with money can make a career; the doubling of a market from, say, 5 to 10 per cent is more than enough to win fame and fortune. Yet targeting is surely a different matter when the goal is to achieve the 40-45 per cent of the vote—the likely minimum necessary to win a general election. C2s cannot do this on their own. Nor can the Midlands. Nor can share-owners.

Mrs Thatcher came to power on the basis of a swing by all classes. It will take an equally broad movement to remove her

Resources are limited and must be prioritised. Yet the search for "the" key group or groups in the electorate is always doomed to fail, and it's about time that was recognised.

Each and every vote still counts as one, although sometimes a mixture of illusion and hype may persuade us that that is not so. ●

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The butchers in Bush's backyard

Death squads are on the loose again in Guatemala, reports Marc Cooper, while a brutal strong man waits in the wings

Santa Cruz del Quiche, Guatemala

Scorched earth. *Tierra arrasada*: the unofficial term used to describe the official policy employed by the Guatemalan army, when it slashed and burned through here in the early 1980s. Now, thick wads of wild grass battle the ferns while above, mango and pine trees fight it out with bamboo bushes and figs.

On the ashes of the torched villages sprout new clumps of wooden shacks with corrugated roofs. Along this stretch of the Guatemalan highlands, the Maya Quiche Indians, one of more than 20 indigenous groups that make up the poorest two-thirds of the country's population, once again sit quietly on the roadside. In their handwoven, scarlet-ticked blouses and psychedelic skirts they sell carrots, onions, yellow orchids and handicrafts. Their children balance huge plastic vessels of water on their heads and their husbands trudge under the burden of 40 pounds of firewood.

Compared with the hellish years of 1981-83, the countryside today seems downright serene. But in Guatemala, the breach between form and substance can be treacherously deceptive. The large-scale military manoeuvres of seven years ago are, indeed, over. But the army's dirty war against leftist insurgents and their suspected Indian

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James Nachtwey/Magnum

porters continues: a campaign that at its height razed 440 Indian villages, took as many as 11,000 lives each year, and displaced a million people.

Students, trade unionists, Indian activists and human rights monitors themselves are being "disappeared" and murdered (after mutilation) at the rate of 50 per month. Their executioners are the soldiers of Central America's most bloodthirsty armed forces, a military establishment with whom the Bush administration in Washington is increasingly friendly. This country's 30-year civil war, a conflict that has cost 150,000 dead and 40,000 disappeared, is again heating up after a five-year ebb. And gaining in the polls for this November's presidential election is retired General Efrain Rios-Montt, the dictator whose 17-month reign in 1982-3 was placed in "the category of genocide" by the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference.

Here is where death squads were invented 30 years ago. Where forced disappearances were born and perfected into a grisly art. Where terror in Central America began. Though ostensibly into its fifth year of "civilian democracy", Guatemala has once again become a killing field.

As dusk falls over El Quiche province and a light wind stirs, it's not only the fireflies that emerge. Knots of scruffy men and teenage boys stand out against the horizon along the hilly paths and roads. Razor-sharp machetes hang from their sides. Among them they share a motley collection of firearms. In any other Central American country, these militiamen would be taken for guerrilla revolutionaries. But here in Guatemala they are instruments of the state, stark evidence of the forced militarisation of the countryside.

To ensure that Guatemala's Indians would never again support leftist insurgencies, thousands have been forced to live in military-run "model villages". But another 600,000 peasants have been recruited, bullied and press-ganged into ill-named Voluntary Self-Defence Patrols, or PACs in their Spanish abbreviation. Conducting up to 24 hours a week of forced labour and paramilitary patrolling, the PACs are the main mechanism of repression in the countryside.

Thanks to the efforts of one courageous former schoolteacher and the human rights organisation he founded—known as CERJ—the PACs are starting to meet organised resistance. For the last two years, Amilcar Mendez has single-mindedly spread the word among the indigenous communities that the PACs violate the 1985 constitution's ban on indentured servitude. "We teach them their basic rights. That just because you don't wear chains doesn't mean you are not a slave," Mendez tells me as he prepares a trip to the US to meet Jimmy Carter. On the wall behind him is a poster reading: "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 4 says no-one shall be subjected to slavery or servitude." Mendez continues: "We arm them with the Guatemalan constitution, the UN and OAS human rights charters, and with those documents in hand, they can stand up to the military and say 'No! We won't go'."

About 10,000 civilians have joined with CERJ and dropped out of the PACs, provoking a predictable reaction from the military. By day, Mendez is the object of a psychological war in which the work of CERJ is equated with the insurgency. When Mendez travelled to a nearby village in April to protest against the murder of a co-worker, the military blocked the road with 500 armed PAC members who cried out for his blood. By night, the blood of CERJ *is* spilled.

The CERJ offices, in fact, serve as temporary living quarters for the frightened and threatened relatives of murdered activists. Last October, Pedro Castro and two dozen others quit the village PAC. By January, the local

Left—Induction at a Guatemalan military base; centre—Armed Forces Day in Guatemala City; above—state repression using "voluntary" patrols

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military commissioner had ordered the owners of the town's corn mills not to grind the harvest of Pedro or 16 other men who left the patrols. Finally in March, Pedro says, the town's two military commissioners broke into his shack after sundown, shot his wife in the face, killing her, and pumped four bullets into him and left him for dead.

Because Pedro survived and could make a positive identification, and because of vigorous work by volunteer American human rights attorneys on behalf of CERJ, the two commissioners were arrested for murder this April. But though the case has been taken up by Americas Watch and the Interamerican Court of the Organisation of American States, the so-called trial judge freed them in late May, citing, as usual, "lack of evidence". Pedro has appealed against the temporary acquittal of his assailants; but Mendez was not surprised by the verdict: "In this country, civilian governments can come and go. But it is the military that rules."

In this country civilian governments can come and go. But it is the military that rules

Back in Guatemala City, the public spokesman for that military is 52-year-old Colonel Arturo Isaacs Rodriguez. The colonel, as image-conscious media man, has taken the trouble of trading in his uniform for black pants, a chequered sports jacket, and a violet dress shirt with grey-red tie. But someone over at the US embassy has evidently neglected to tell him to remove from his waiting room the sole piece of reading material: the magazine of the wacky Taiwan-based World Anti-Communist League.

I ask the colonel about the reports that those who quit the PACs are targets of "reprisals". "What really happens," he says, "is that CERJ mixes itself up in cases of robbery and murder and then tries to blame it on the PACs. But they never have proof of anything. Never."

At the American embassy in Guatemala City's smart Zone 10, the most a "US official" can work himself up to say on the record about the PACs is that "the evidence is really mixed. Most, but not all, of the patrols seem to be voluntary."

And what about a concerted campaign of harassment and murder against resisters? "There's no concerted campaign," says the official. "But there is evidence that certain members of the military are involved, and that other higher officers are involved in attempts to cover them up."

That's not sufficient reason for the Bush administration or Congress to cut US aid to the government and armed forces. Such assistance was suspended during the Carter years and during the frenzied bloodletting of the early 1980s. But in 1985 Washington quietly turned on the taps and since then Guatemala has been awarded almost $1 billion in US tax dollars, with aid this year running at $130 million.

With a supposedly moderate civilian reformer, Vinicio Cerezo, in the presidency since 1986, liberal Democrats in the US have often taken the lead on funding Guatemala. Ask an American policymaker why aid continues and the answer is that without US tutelage the Guatemalan army will run amok; that we will have no leverage. Point out that amok is the way the army already runs, and the same policymaker says, yeah, ain't it a shame. Maybe if we gave them more aid, our counsel would have more weight.

US agencies have strengthened their ties with the most malevolent faction of the Guatemalan military, the dreaded D-2 intelligence branch. US drug and intelligence bodies reportedly compete for the loyalty of D-2 operatives and hand out large cash payments to them. Guatemala-based US officers work with a D-2 team in a US-funded drug interdiction and crop-spraying programme. US intelligence officers depend on D-2 as local ears and eyes. US officials turn a blind eye to D-2's political crimes and murders.

President Cerezo, backed by the US, was supposed not only to put an end to such killings, but to implement thorough political and economic reform. But after an initial two years of populist rhetoric, Cerezo has aggressively enforced an IMF-backed austerity programme that has severely aggravated Guatemala's impoverished state. Guatemala is now classified as the "poorest" country in Central America with 71 per cent of the population living below the poverty line. Instead of fulfilling his promise of income redistribution, Cerezo has put his penniless countrymen on the world auction block by swinging open the doors to tax free *maquiladoras*—foreign-owned sweat shops where wages average a dollar a day and unions are taboo. And the president has now abandoned any pretence of chipping away at *de facto* military rule.

American policy makers, using their nauseating sports metaphors, say their major concern now is to reach the "handoff". That is, the first peaceful transfer of Guatemala between two succeeding civilian administrations (at least, since the CIA overthrew the last truly democratic government here in 1954). But to get to those November goalposts, the political players in Guatemala City and Washington are going to have to step over mounds of bodies and dodge bursts of shrapnel. The Guatemalan Human Rights Commission reported 46 "extralegal executions" and 12 disappearances during four weeks in May.

One dark figure out of Guatemala's past has stepped forward to ride the waves of instability. Former general Efrian Rios-Montt is rising in the polls. Claiming to have been inspired by a stern Protestant God, he seized power in 1982, and for a year and a half had his urban opponents set up before Extraordinary Tribunals and firing squads, while he turned the Indian highlands into mass burial grounds Some pundits are already inclined to concede him victory.

"Rios-Montt is a very serious problem," says publisher Ariel Deleon. "He is gaining in popularity each day. It's not that the people lack political memory of his deeds. I fear it's the other way around. His Extraordinary Tribunals, his military campaigns are still fresh in people's minds. Yet they are not an electoral handicap, but rather assets. He is promising order and security in the midst of chaos."

I go to see a friend I will call Alejandro, a veteran political scientist at San Carlos University. Eleven student leaders at his university were kidnapped last autumn, five of their bodies showing up in pieces and six disappearing into the void. So it comes as no surprise that as we sit down, Alejandro turns on the TV in his living room to defeat electronic eavesdropping.

"The biggest mistake you can make about Guatemala is to underestimate the military strength of the insurgency," Alejandro says. "The guerrillas are growing again. The biggest battles since 1960 have been fought in the last four years. At the same time the army has never been stronger and therefore is adamantly opposed to any negotiations."

"All of a sudden some very naive people are expecting the guerrillas to just fold up their tents now that east Europe and Nicaragua have collapsed," Alejandro continues. "But this is an ongoing, unresolved peasant war for the land."

"What's happening here is what happened in El Salvador, with the US concentrating on democratic *forms*, on appearances, while in reality supporting and bolstering the most authoritarian, anti-democratic forces in society. They create a situation that naturally leads to extremist solutions. In El Salvador today you have a democracy led by the anti-democrat Cristiani. And here in Guatemala, President Cerezo has so disillusioned the country that the way is now cleared for an up-front strongman. Next year the US might just find itself saddled with a 'democracy' headed by Rios-Montt. If not him, by someone just as unthinkable. No matter who is elected, it will be the same old military who will hold the highest cards." ●

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SCARGILL

Bottomless pit

East Europe's miners were ready to help their British comrades. Now, says John Lloyd, they must fight for survival

One of the east European mineworkers who assisted the British miners during the 1984-85 strike (or who thought he did) is Lubomir Tomica, who worked at the Antonin Zapotocky pit near Ostrava, in Bohemia. He is a remarkable man: stripped of his army commission (captain) in 1969 for reform communism, he found a job in the mines and worked there until earlier this year, when he was offered his commission back (as a major). In November, he took up the challenge posed by Civic Forum, and argued, to initially sceptical workmates who had been schooled to view people like Vaclav Havel as whinging, rich degenerates, that their grievances had enough in common with the Prague intellectuals' to make the latter worth supporting.

When I last saw him, he took me to see the Zapotocky, one of the biggest mines in the country. I was not able to go down: but on the surface, it looked pretty bad. Many of the buildings were dilapidated, even rotting; the grime and stench was everywhere and overpowering. The huge Ostrava complex of mines and steel mills has produced an ecological horror, amidst which the miners' settlements—square, 1970s flat blocks in barrack-like rows—squat.

Tomica's flat, for him, his wife and teenage daughter, is three very small rooms, a kitchen and bathroom. It is clean and comfortable, but the kitchen is not fitted, and he will never have a ranch-style bungalow. I mention that because it is possible that the money he gave to the British miners formed part of a loan to Peter Heathfield for fittings for his kitchen, or to Arthur Scargill for a new bungalow.

He heard Scargill speak once, and was impressed at the figure the Yorkshireman cut. There had, however, been complaints about the involuntary deductions from pay which the Czechoslovak miners' union made to assist the British comrades in struggle. These had mainly been of the "why should we give to these rich people?" variety—but since deductions for fraternal assistances were not uncommon, it passed without serious challenge. (The Zapotocky men assumed the British miners were rich, since the TV said they were poor: actually, a British miner's real living standard *would* be substantially above that of Tomica, who is highly paid in Czechoslovak terms. He would have a better car, better food and, above all, a bigger house or flat.)

All over eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, men like Tomica—most living at an even lower level, especially the Russians—gave up to a day's pay to the striking British miners. According to Gavin Lightman, the barrister whose report on the National Union of Mineworkers' national officials' use of the strike funds lies behind the challenge now faced by Scargill, these donations did not reach the NUM strike funds. For nearly all the miners, except the few convinced communists among them, it was another tedious deduction in aid of a faraway group of workers of whom they knew little. It was something commanded by "them"—the Party, in its various forms as the union, the management, the foreman—in aid of their foreign friends. Some would not have cared, some would have approved: Tomica, a bit of a rebel himself, quite liked the idea.

British miners certainly minded its being used as a loan for larger homes (if it was), or sitting in the coffers of the International Miners' Organisation, the body which did little else but change the name of the old communist-front union (from the Miners' Trade Union International, with the NUM and a few others added to the east European and third world organisations). The miners, who in the Soviet Union are now leading working class protest against the system and whose demands are largely democratic, are used to their leaders misusing their money and have risen against it. Tomica twice rose against it, the second time successfully.

Scargill claimed he was using the east European miners' money to support a strike which collapsed: that would have merited an explanation to donors who do not have money to waste. But to take it and not to use it for that purpose was a terrible thing to do, a parody of the "internationalism" in whose name the support was given.

The British miners, so far, do not seem to be doing much rising against it—except to give a standing ovation to their president at the recent NUM conference. Only the Welsh and Scots delegates—their areas decimated since the strike—kept in their seats, and spoke against Scargill afterwards. In part, this is class loyalty: in part it is the response of beaten men, no longer with the energy or will to challenge someone who still wishes to fight to the last to keep his job. When the NUM was patently the most powerful working class institution in the country, it was worth a battle to secure its leadership. Now, the inheritance is a small, dwindling, riven, broken union which must soon merge and so accept subordinate status.

Tomica's flat is clean and comfortable. But the kitchen is not fitted and and he will never have a ranch-style bungalow

Yet while the British are beaten and the east Europeans, the Soviets especially, are now cresting a militant wave, it may be they are on the same continuum. Already, as marketisation takes hold in Hungary and Poland, coal mines are targeted first, since they usually enjoy the largest subsidies *per capita*. Soon, these miners will—if their militant traditions hold—be in a struggle with the state for survival. Shouldn't the millions in the International Miners' Organisation account in Paris be sent back eastward again with a note of thanks and an explanation that it wasn't necessary? Isn't that where it will be needed, when the men of the Donbass and the Kuzbass, Silesia and Ostrava, discover they too are a problem rather than a solution?

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Peace dividends

Defence contracts have featherbedded US industry, reports Alexander Cockburn. Now the party's over, but the hawks won't go home

The capitalist powers, minus Japan, gathered first for the Nato meeting in London, announced that the first and second worlds were "no longer adversaries" and duly reaffirmed their "intention to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state."

Then the capitalist powers, Japan included, descended unto Houston to consider what credits to give the Soviet Union, and to indulge in customary seasonal handwringing about the great motor of the 1980s boom, the US deficit. Also in progress in Houston was an alternative conference on prospects (very bad) for the poorest nations.

Houston is probably as good a place as any to locate a capitalist summit. Its hyperbolic skyline startlingly records the glories of the 1960s and 70s, while the graph of its real estate prices in the 1980s shows what happened when the Angel of Death flew among the skyscrapers and the bottom fell out of the oil market. Conditions have since improved in the oil patch, but the Angel of Death is still on assignment and, though barely acknowledged, his shadow hung over the Houston economic summit. If the great motor of the 1980s was the US deficit, the most active component of that deficit was military expenditure. But if the first and second worlds are no longer adversaries, how can arms spending be justified on anything like the present scale?

A few weeks ago the *New York Times* ran a somewhat upbeat piece by Louis Uchitelle, taking the view that though clearly an important ingredient of the 1980s economic boom, military spending was not as crucial as it had been in former times. I remarked at the time that, in view of federal military purchases in California of $90 billion in 1989, to take the most obvious example, this seemed very upbeat. On 3 July, the paper ran a more realistic and far gloomier report by Robert Reinhold.

It's no longer enough to say: think globally, act locally. For workers everywhere, the slogan has to be: an injury to one is an injury to all

Aerospace and high technology employ about 420,000 people in greater Los Angeles, 7 per cent of the region's workforce. One fifth of San Diego county's gross output depends on military procurement and salaries. McDonnel Douglas, the huge aerospace firm, plans to lay off 17,000 workers. Two of the other major aerospace contractors, Lockheed and Northrop, have also announced cutbacks. Lockheed has already said it will lay off some 2,500 workers and move one of its operations to Georgia, meaning 4,500 job cuts. Northrop, which is the prime contractor for the Stealth bomber, plans to lay off some 2,700.

Also under threat are the Long Beach naval shipyard (4,000 workers), the Los Angeles Air Force Base (3,000 workers) and the Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo (3,000 workers); and San Diego is reeling from the threat of the Defence Secretary to cut almost a quarter of the navy's fleet there. Reinhold cites one computer model of California's economy as forecasting a shortfall of 151,000 jobs and a $7 billion drop in the state's projected GNP, if US military spending drops by 11.5 per cent in 1992.

In Los Angeles, the consequences are already being reflected in housing prices, in housing starts (down 29 per cent from last year) and in vacancy rates in commercial property. As in New York, where the securities industry lost 25,000 jobs in two years, the housing boom is over.

The one bright spot for the big contractors is the space programme. Thousands of engineers, consultants, software designers, programmers and analysts, are now trying to cram themselves down the funnel of the NASA budget. ("Have you heard, it's in the stars, this July we procure for Mars".) What else is there? The wives can go into real estate and the husbands become Amway salesmen, but it still adds up to economic downturn. Lockheed has 39,000 employees in California. Will "conversion" give them jobs? Reinhold had a quote on this topic from Harry Biederman, a Lockheed economist who recalled his company's efforts, along with those of Rohr and Grumman, to diversify into education and computer services after the Vietnam war ended: "We all failed. Defence engineers are brought up in an environment not like the commercial one."

What Biederman meant by this was that Grumman's buses fell apart, that none of them could flourish in the thin air of a non cost-plus environment. I remember a worker from the old Chrysler plant in Indiana once telling me that in his view American production skills went to hell in the second world war, which is when cost-plus really got going, and when the famous discipline of the market which today so obsesses the Russians ceased to exist.

For the large multinational firms whose representatives have been mustered in Houston, prospects are far more alluring than those contemplated by Lockheed or Northrop workers. Under the sheltering, endless sky of a world market and the open visa of free trade, the task is simply that of roaming the planet for cheaper labour. The idea of a social democratic Greater Europe stretching from Shannon Industrial to the Urals with a pan-German Social Democratic Party as its beating political heart and the US Fortune 500 beating vainly at the tariff door seems far too rosy.

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Fortune's US 500 is already, to a large extent, also the World 500. Mergers involving Europe's 1,000 largest firms have quadrupled over the last five years. At present US workers have high wages, relatively low unemployment, low social services and declining unionisation. Workers in Europe, still highly unionised, have low wages, high social services and high unemployment. How long before the disciplines of the world market and the world firm seek the most attractive combination of these traits: low wages, low social services, no unionisation and high unemployment? Of course it's happened. In Watsonville, California, the Green Giant packing house, which has 300 workers organised in Local 912 of the Teamsters, is relocating to a non-union shop in Ohio, following decisions ultimately traceable to Grand Metropolitan, the end-owner based in London. Grand Metropolitan doesn't give a toss if Local 912 pickets the Watsonville plant. It's no longer enough to say: think global, act locally. For those Green Giant workers and for workers everywhere in the world market the slogan has to be: an injury to one is an injury to all. Grand Metropolitan would give a toss if the Teamsters called on workers (of the world) to boycott another of its subsidiaries, Burger King, and to picket Grand Metropolitan Corporate HQ in London.

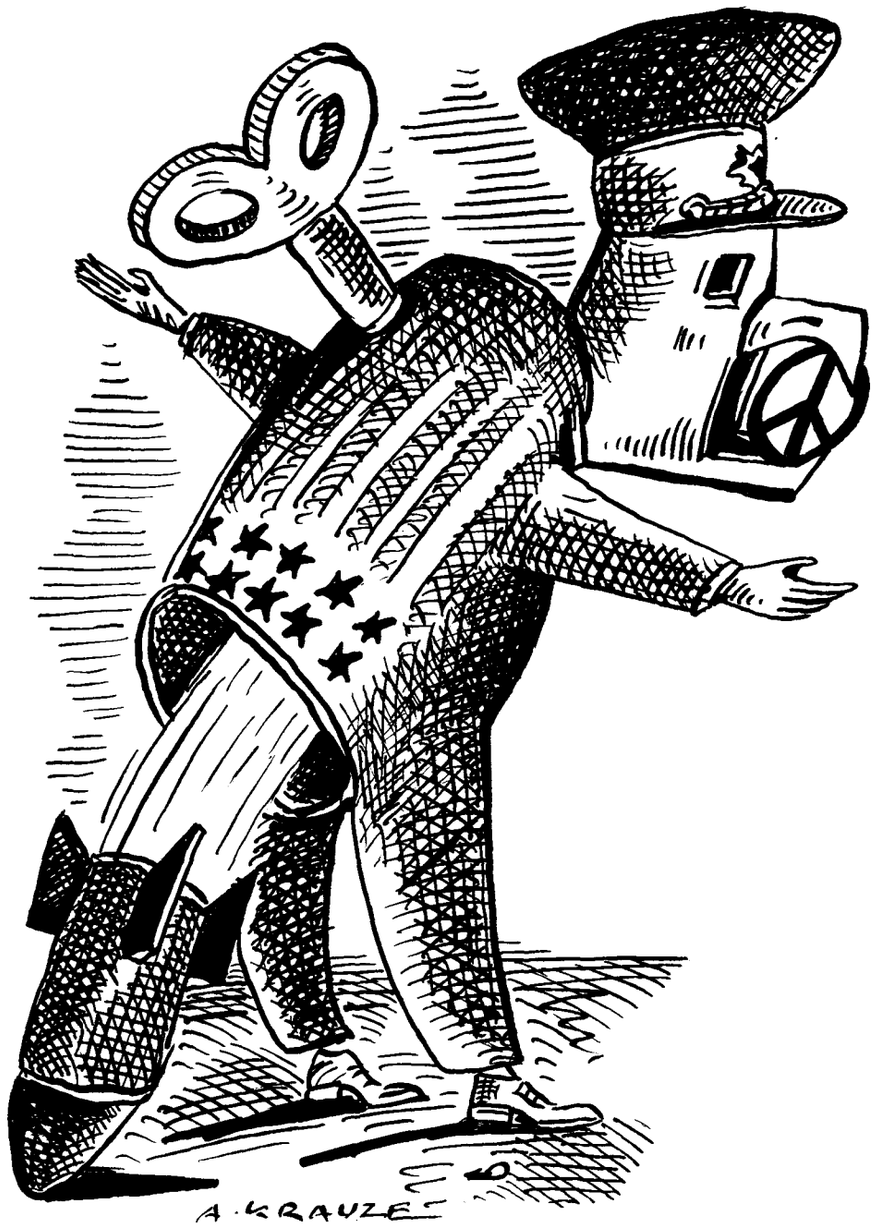
While the world firms' elected officers in Houston contemplate the "end of the cold war" with enthusiasm and dream of skilled low-cost labour in Dresden or Szeged, there is still a powerful current in the US security establishment which sees the present "victory" in the cold war as illusory, and the seeming surrender of the Soviet Union as fake. In comic-book terms this typically takes the form of a group like the relatively influential right-wing International Security Council posing the question "whether we are witnessing a tactical zig in Soviet policies intended to bolster the grand strategy of achieving global hegemony" and concluding that yes, Red Bruin is still on the rampage.

In less comic-book terms it takes the form of a paper by Edward Jay Epstein, now circulating through the security establishment with increasing speed and popularity. Epstein, a heterodox thinker with plenty of friends on right-wing circuits and a familiar of the late crazed CIA counter-intelligence chief, James Angleton, recently formulated "110 Questions" about what the Soviet Union is really up to. The questions are highly detailed and deliberately provocative in an Angletonian manner, implying that Red Bruin has plenty of malign life left in his body. Take Question 26 in Epstein's interrogatory:

> "Soviet officials have informed US Soviet experts that they are shifting Soviet warheads around the USSR to avoid them being seized by dissidents, military factions or criminals... Is the purpose of this brief:
> A) To focus western attention on the possibility that nuclear weapons could be seized, and thereby lay the basis... for both the US and USSR installing passive locks on all nuclear warheads?
> B) To provide a plausible explanation for the redeployment of Soviet warheads this winter that may have been observed by US satellites?
> C) To project weakness?
> D) To tell the truth?
> If A), Would passive locks on US sub-launched missiles increase the possibility of a successful Soviet decapitation strike? If so, are they in the interest of the US?
> If B), Is hiding weapons still a part of Soviet military doctrine?
> If so, does this movement present a problem for the US effort to track Soviet stockpiles?"

Now the American security establishment has been asking this sort of thing ever since General Jack D. Ripper equated the cold war with the state of his precious bodily fluids, and the traditional answer has been a congressional appropriation for a new satellite system and so assured employment for aerospace workers in the Greater Los Angeles area.

By the time he reaches Question 100 Epstein has successfully demonstrated that the USSR is probably not as militarily weak, industrially depleted and politically at sea as is commonly portrayed in the western press, and he asks:



> "100. If the USSR remains at least a potential enemy, is the policy of aiding it to modernise and thus make more efficient its industrial and communications infrastructure justified by the theory:
> A) The economic modernisation of the USSR will decrease its incentive to continue the superpower competition?
> B) The economic modernisation of the USSR will lead to the democratisation of the USSR, and democracies do not threaten other nations or compete with the US?
> If A), Is there any historic basis for this theory? Would the same logic have applied to helping Germany modernise in the 1930s?
> If B), Would that not be an argument for aiding China—and all other totalitarian regimes modernise? Moreover, some democracies, such as India, do conduct aggressive foreign policies"

The logic of Epstein's interrogatory is simple enough: the Soviet Union will only be down when it's out, and the benchmark for establishing when it is truly out can constantly be moved, against the hostage of credits and high-technology transfer. Out? But it still supports the Afghan regime! Out? But it still helps support Cuba! Out? But it still does not permit the inheritance of wealth and hence the creation of a property-owning class...

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LETTERS

Looking for a miracle

I read Clare Short's letter (29 June) with the air of anger and despair that I have grown used to expecting whenever I read any of the pronouncements of Labour MPs on the subject of democratic reform.

When will the party put an end to the squirming that we as ordinary members of the Labour Party have to suffer whenever we are ridiculed by some smug member of the Liberal Democrats over Labour's paltry commitment to democracy? Why is it that our party has to be dragged whining and complaining into every decent position on democratic reform?

Ms Short remains "deeply attached to the democracy we already have" (within the party). Really. And which democracy is that? I see little that is very "democratic" about the current system and certainly little to be attached to. Where is the much-vaunted courage of Mr Kinnock when it comes to implementing one-person-one-vote? He can see off Militant, sweep through widescale policy changes within a couple of years, yet reforms within the party are to be "carefully considered". It sounds like a fudge to me.

The main point, however, of Ms Short's letter is to insist on the "radicalism" of Labour's constitutional proposals. Well I'm afraid to the outside observer they look pretty pathetic. Where is the radicalism which she claims? Many of the proposals seem to be rather weak imitations of Liberal Democrat positions, weak because they don't even appear to go as far as the Liberal Democrats do in challenging existing structures and customs.

It remains ridiculous, for example, to suggest PR for the new second chamber and the European Parliament but not for the Commons. Moreover, democracy involves more than just tinkering with the institutional arrangements at the centre. Democracy is about undermining domination and despotic power hierarchies. What is sorely lacking in the Labour proposals is any sense of a wider democratisation. The judiciary, as Ms Short points out, is clearly a case for treatment, but what about workplace democracy, what about schools, what about opening up politics to women or ethnic minorities? What about empowering citizens rather than just changing a few mechanisms at the level of the elite?

If, as some suggest, Labour needs to take on democratic reform as its version of "the white heat of technology" in 1992, it needs to come up with something more coherent and radical than the current bag of rather unconected proposals. As R W Johnson suggests ("Fettered freedom", 29 June), it first of all should do some serious thinking about a constitution. But that thinking should be radical as well as serious. The sad point about the next election is that we still need something little short of a miracle to win and miracles in my experience tend to be accompanied by flashing light. The current proposals on democratic reform, unfortunately, have all the brilliance of a 15 watt light bulb.

Simon Manley
Meadvale Road
London W5

Best health in the West

Alexander Cockburn ("Social history of tears", 15 June) is correct in stating that life expectancy is higher in China than in India, which advantage he attributes to the beneficent influence of Marxism. However, life expectancy is higher again in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, those sinks of unregenerate capitalism. Perhaps the problem with the Indians is not so much that they are not *communists* but rather that they are not *Chinese*!

It is interesting to note that life expectancy in the former eastern European bloc countries is lower than in any western European country. Czechoslovakia, for example, has a lower life expectancy (and a higher infant mortality) than Portugal, the poorest west European country. Contrast this with the position in the 1930s when Czechoslovakia was one of the most prosperous and progressive countries in Europe and Portugal a by-word for poverty and backwardness. It would seem that 40 years of Marxism has a more depressing effect on a society than 40 years of fascism.

But what of the "Socialist Homeland", the "Country of the Revolution"? Life expectancy in the Soviet Union is lower than in Mexico.

These facts should be borne in mind when people (like Cockburn) express sadness over the prospect of the peoples of eastern Europe losing the "gains" of socialism, among which "gains" they include a high standard of health care.

Francis Rowan
Portmarnock
Co Dublin
Ireland

Confronting Aids

I read with concern your article on Aids ("Surrey's brat pack", 29 June). Obviously your article was designed to show the ignorance of the "brat pack" but, as a 19-year-old female, I want to make it clear that their views on Aids did not represent mine.

I have been using condoms since 1985, when I first heard about Aids. I learnt everything I know about the disease through friends, not through government information. I wonder just how much they invest in Aids research compared to how much they spend on weapons. Mrs Thatcher has not yet grasped that we are at war against Aids, not people with Aids/HIV.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time I've heard this confused voice. Has it never crossed the minds of people like George Gale (who are so keen to label Aids as a gay disease) that lesbian sex is probably the safest sex? It is a fact that anal sex involves more bleeding than vaginal sex, and that is tragic for homosexuals. (The same can be said about heterosexual sex where the female can be infected more easily than the male, but this does not make it a female disease.)

Newspapers like the *Sun* and *Daily Mail* take great pleasure in brain-washing people to believe that Aids is a "gay plague", causing hostile feelings towards gays among ignorant heterosexuals. Until they decide to write about Aids in an honest, intelligent way (based on facts rather than prejudices), then I can only see their reports as a massive set-back to Aids campaigning in the long run.

The attitudes of these kids will be difficult to change as they seem so set in their ways. But I hope that Cathy and her friends learn to be careful through information and common sense, not through personal experience.

Lucy
London

Fed up with federalism

I agree with much of the analysis of your editorial ("Viva Europe", 22 June) but the one point you do not address is *why* Britain should become part of a federal Europe. The reasons you do give are not compelling and somewhat clichéd.

Take, for example, the notion that nation-states are outdated. That is not true. The re-emergence of the nation-state is giving the people of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and all of eastern Europe a new sense of freedom in a smaller national unit.

Equally, there are plenty of perfectly peaceful, non-imperialistic nation-states with a very healthy standard of living for their people, who would not even understand what you mean when you call their unit "too weak economically to make (their) own way in the world". Tell that to Japan or West Germany, or South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong or even Singapore.

Nation-states can be oppressive, politically and culturally. But so can any political system. The wrongs committed by federations easily match those of nation-states: slavery in the US; Australian exploitation of aboriginals; Malaysian religious intolerance; Indian state chauvinism; Canadian disregard for Indian minorities; Yugoslav separatism and worst of all, Soviet imperialism. More to the point, the last three federations are disintegrating, from democratic Canada to bureaucratic Russia.

Most federalists in Europe feel the way they do out of a sense of idealism. The contradictions in their political and economic arguments become evident, as you can see, relatively quickly.

Your arguments, however, do not strike me as being particularly idealistic. On the contrary, your perception that Europe is a tougher adversary of Mrs Thatcher's than

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any home-grown influence betrays a cynical approach which is not altogether hopeful for the future of Europe.

How long will it take before you are fed up of "their" institutions in Brussels?

Patrick Robertson
The Bruges Group
Whitehall Court
Westminster
London SW1

Beard and beer-gut

Frank Kippax may have identity problems, but I don't see why I should be roped in with accusations of being a woman and a "children's writer" to boot (Letters, 15 June). To be stuck in one ghetto is bad enough, but this is outrageous. For the record, I'm a man (with beard and beer-gut to prove it) and I write for adults more than for children. Good heavens, I even used to write *Brookside*!

Jan Needle
Manchester

THIS ENGLAND

£5 book tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please)

● In a joint initiative with the National Trust, Cornish firefighters are undergoing a crash course in arts appreciation at Lanhydrock House, the Trust's stately home in Bodmin. After the loss of national treasures in fires at Uppark and Hampton Court, the Cornish brigade is determined that its men should be able to rush in and salvage the most valuable items before they are ruined forever. "We have been practising carrying mock treasures back at the station," says Frank Renals, director of the Cornwall country brigade.—*Times* (George Moor)

● [He was] not so long ago in a serious crash on the M4. Allan Haines, a former editor of *Angling Times* and one of the country's best-known fishermen, says: "I left my wife and two daughters stretched out on the hard shoulder—they were shocked and, to be honest, I didn't know how badly they were hurt—and ran back to my car. Two or three times I tried to reach through the flames, until the firemen threw me out of the way. They didn't understand, you see, that my float box was in there."—*Times* (George Moor)

FRINGE BENEFITS

Planting peace

Colin Ward

Prosperous East Anglia, with an actual increase in its income as a spin-off from the presence of American air force bases, has never been an easy place for nuclear disarmament. Our local CND branch has had to work its way through every style of approach to arouse the interest of fellow-citizens. Leaflets in the streets and on doorsteps and coach trips to national demonstrations brought warm support from the tiny minority of the convinced, and either total indifference or uncomprehending hostility from the overwhelming majority.

"My husband didn't give his life in the second world war, just so that you could invite the Russians in," was the characteristic response of dear old ladies. Could the campaigners find a chink in the automatic armour?

In another rural area, learning that Leominster District Council were building, on government instructions, a nuclear bunker to preserve its administrative machine, the local peace groups produced the handsome and beautifully illustrated *Bunker Book for Leominster* about the district where they lived. Just the thing to appeal to the heritage-lovers, they thought. The message was that it would be such a pity if all this were to be destroyed in other people's military adventures. They planted it in all the shops and sent it to all councillors. One returned his copy, torn up.

Down our way, as one member had a garden full of snowdrops, Hadleigh CND instituted a yearly Snowdrop Fair as an annual ritual celebrating the portents of spring. Wouldn't it disarm that built-in hostility if it could be shown that the disarmers shared the same ordinary enthusiasms as their antagonists?

That was why they took up the idea of the Hiroshima cherries. For forty years in many countries, the Hill Cherry or Yamazukura has been planted as a reminder of the fate of the inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. So the late Mark Gretton approached the district council for permission to plant one in a public place in Hadleigh. This was refused. There were those who urged that they should simply plant one on a bank holiday and see if anyone noticed, but this was thought provocative while the aim was to win people over.

So Mark turned to the religious denominations who, after all, had graveyards or grassy forecourts, intimations of mortality. Interestingly he was turned down by every nonconformist organisation, but was welcomed by the ancient parish church in the middle of town, and by the modern Catholic church. So we had a tree-planting ceremony at both places and the Hiroshima cherries, with priestly blessing, now flourish.

The notion of planting for peace, regarded with such suspicion down our way, has had a sudden upturn elsewhere. Despite the vast vested interests of politicians and the military lobby in their search for new targets, people realise that the cold war is over, and want to celebrate with something green and useful.

Two London boroughs and several other places in Britain have established peace parks or peace gardens, aiming to provide cases of serenity and repose. An attractive little book has appeared, dedicated to the proposal that "the ethos of peace be fostered and expressed through the language of landscape, and that social opportunities can be suggested by such places". So it's called *Places for Peace*.

It has been written by John McKean for Architects for Peace, a long-established minority of professionals in architecture and landscape who look up from their drawing-boards to contemplate not only the effects of nuclear disaster on the built environment, but also the life-giving potential of public gardens which are commemorative, celebratory and of everyday use. (It costs £5 from Architects for Peace, at 57D Jamestown Road, London NW1 7DB).

Back in Suffolk we are made of sterner stuff. How does the collapse of the cold war affect our pockets? At one stage it was stated that United States service personnel would be exempt from paying the community charge. Then the official line changed overnight because of the obvious comparison between their disposable income and that of their neighbours. Every last general and second-class private will get the same reimbursement from the Pentagon.

Mr Jack Haylock, chairman of the Mildenhall Anglo-American Committee, says that any plans to close the bases "would have a devastating effect" as the personnel there contribute £43 million annually to the local economy.

There is no dismay over the USAF base at Bentwaters, since both the US and UK governments intend that it should house a new generation of nuclear missiles. As our MP explained, "it would be rash for the west to drop its guard too quickly." No, these newly-imported nuclear weapons will not break the INF treaty, as they are long-range weapons designed to strike deep into the Soviet Union itself.

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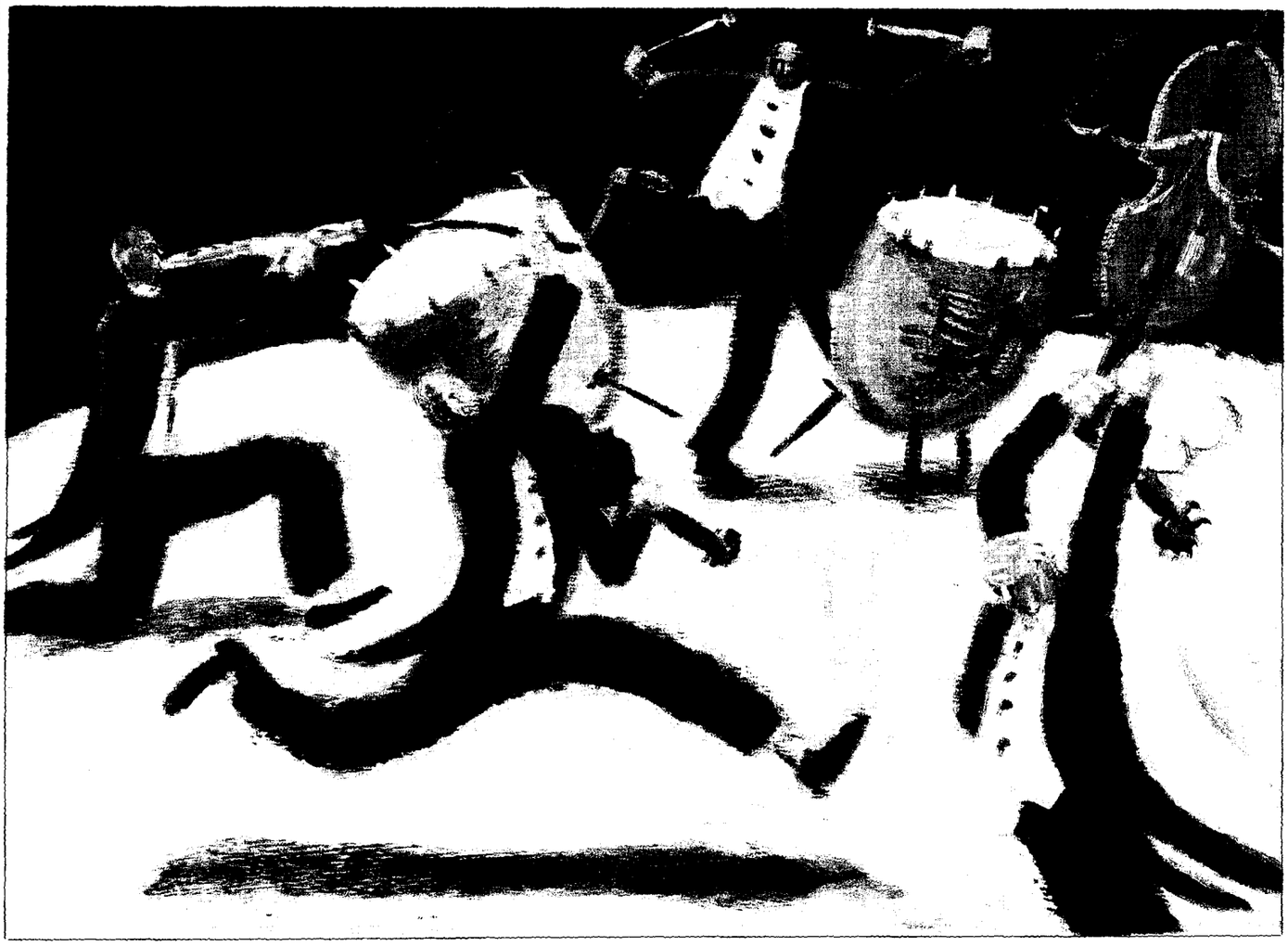

Dan Williams

A mongrel of dubious pedigree

Classical music has discovered beat and style. Kevin Loader looks beyond the hype

The giant strawberry on the poster was deliberately enigmatic. Its accompanying slogan—"CLASSICAL MUSIC BLOODY LOUD" (or, in some versions, merely "VERY LOUD") provided no clue to the fruit's musical significance. Were the organisers of the recent London Chamber Orchestra appearance at the Hammersmith Odeon attempting to persuade us that, along with Glyndebourne, Epsom and Wimbledon, the so-called "Power Concert" was destined to become part of the English social season? Or was the reference to George Martin's innovative use of an orchestra on a 23-year old Beatles track?

A luxurious and expensive (£5) programme used the strawberry to tease us further: in the Sunday supplement-style "interviews" with the glamorously photographed musicians, various answers were provided. Violinist Cathy Thomson (favourite food, "corn on the cob and baked potato") pronounced it "My big toe". Another fiddler, Rosemary Furniss (greatest pleasure, "windsurfing") took it to signify the "natural evolution of flower power". Maybe those Strawberry Fields were nearer the truth after all...

Virgin Classics has now released ten compact discs of the LCO, and is marketing classical music with an oblique graphics-led flair previously reserved for rock albums. The generation of music buyers now approaching middle age is looking to extend its aesthetic range. For the record companies, the strategy is clear: classical music has to be repositioned in the market.

Hence the strawberry. The more established classical labels have, paradoxically, gone for the hard-sell. Recent album covers have featured cellist Ofra Harnoy posing provocatively with her instrument, or Italian mezzo Celia Bartoli got up in black leather more suited to Studio 54 than Salzburg. Nigel Kennedy, the seemingly unorthodox chunky chappie of British music, appears on *Wogan* extolling the virtues of Aston Villa. The Kronos Quartet throw in their arrangement of Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze" as an encore.

It appears to be working. Kennedy's recording of *The Four Seasons* has sold 400,000 copies. Pavarotti, with a little help from the BBC sports department, scales to the top of the charts with a Puccini aria. Last week's super-tenor concert at Rome's Caracalla Baths reached a satellite TV audience of 800 million.

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Businessmen realise that sponsorship of classical music will bring the respectability of an ancient and non-political art that can now deliver an enviably affluent demographic profile.

There seems to be no problem using the performers' personalities as a marketing tool, though recent excesses have drawn worried comments from the Incorporated Society of Musicians. Record companies and opera houses were fighting over stars long before recent marketing initiatives. After all, Pavarotti is probably in the top ten of global name recognition, after Michael Jackson, Madonna and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The classical recording industry is now part of the battleplan between competing media empires: the Sony Corporation owns CBS; the rich back-catalogue of RCA is controlled by the German publishers Bertelsmann; Warner Communications and Polygram have between them dragged most of the formerly independent labels (like Erato, Deutsche Grammophon or Philips) under their corporate umbrellas. So it's hardly surprising that big names should be bitterly fought over, whether they are names (such as Mehta or Michelangeli) that will appeal to the traditional cognoscenti, or those who will combine their art with a fair amount of public relations artifice.

The more crucial decisions involve the choice of music. LCO's catalogue begins from the melodic standard repertoire of Vivaldi and Mozart, but ranges through to the popular systems music of Philip Glass, John Adams *et al,* and includes a work by rock composer Nick Bicat, the new-age cycle *Under the Eye of Heaven.*

Some would call this "cross-over" music. More often it refers to a mongrel of dubious pedigree. It's nothing new, of course. When Eric Clapton recently performed a Michael Kamen guitar concerto at the Royal Albert Hall, he was surely rediscovering a tradition that includes Deep Purple's *Concerto for Rock Group and Orchestra* or Keith Emerson's *Five Bridges Suite* (both 1970). Rock music, from Genesis to Zappa, has always wanted to be taken seriously.

What's changed is that classical musicians now want to be taken lightly. Come in and join us, they smile, there's nothing hard about this stuff. It's got tunes, it's got beat, it's got style.

Not all the classical repertoire can be treated this way, unfortunately. Schoenberg and Boulez aren't getting new brand labels. For the new marketeers, much of the 20th century's most significant aural art is beyond the pale. Virgin Classics's MD Simon Foster's view of modern musical history is their new orthodoxy: "For some reason which I can't explain ", he argues, "everything changed after the first world war...Serious composers decided that tunes had to be relegated to the historical dustbin to be replaced by a cacophony of sounds that no one can really enjoy."

Simon Foster's bid to become the Prince Charles of classical music threatens to relegate more than the achievement of modernism to the historical dustbin. Bach and Mozart may be tuneful, but a proper understanding of their work does depend on more than the superficial recognition of pleasing melody. New marketing strategies may win new audiences, but will they then help those audiences to be properly discerning?

It's hard to argue with those who want to take a flame-thrower to the complacency of the classical establishment, as represented by Radio 3 and the South Bank Centre. The average classical audience is enough to make the flesh creep—its ethos of goody two-shoes anal-retentive dullness would drive away most village librarians. Steve Martland and Michael Nyman should be included on Festival Hall programmes more regularly than they are. But the richness and complexity of music shouldn't have to be completely sacrificed in the pursuit of larger audiences.

There are two different issues here, which the record companies are doing their best to blur. Breaking down the restrictive barriers of what is thought of as "classical" music is commendable. ENO have done the same in the opera house with their productions of Glass, Sondheim and Weill. This is not the same as selling the established repertoire by dubious methods of presentation. That exercise, which seeks to re-classify Mozart and Beethoven as easy listening, can do nothing but diminish great art. And the worry remains that much of the hype is being expended on less than the best performances of that art.

The "Power Concert" is destined to become part of the English social season

Certainly the "Power Concert" was a huge disappointment. It wasn't nearly powerful enough, for one thing—a conversation with one's neighbour, impossible at a rock concert, would have drawn annoyed hisses from several rows behind. It was like listening to a cinematic soundtrack without the movie—and the much-touted light show and staging was poorly presented and unimaginative. The performances were generally competent, but nothing was as thrilling as an acoustic hearing of a large-scale orchestral work, say, by Berlioz or Mahler.

Simon Foster's defence is that the LCO is "doing nothing more dramatic than simply delivering this exciting and moving music to your ears in exactly the same way as you would hear it at home and, more importantly, at any other popular music concert..." The problem is that this is not inherently dramatic, it's merely louder. Part of the thrill of live musical performance is seeing in action the theory that the instrument is an extension, physically and emotionally, of the player's body and voice. Amplification destroys this relationship. The resultant loss of human scale lessens great music's ability to move us profoundly.

But the crowd were buying the CDs in the foyer, and they won't be disappointed — because, after all, it will sound at home almost exactly as it did on the night. And as it will probably sound next time, too. And you can't ask for more than that, can you?

Art

Seeing red

Louisa Buck investigates the booming Russian art market

"Red Art has put me in the black," asserts ebullient art dealer Roy Miles whose sales of Russian art have bought him a spacious West End gallery which is currently draped in red in honour of his fifth exhibition of contemporary Russian art. "In my last show I sold £11,000 worth in the first hour-and-a-half and had only three pictures left out of 280 by the end, but this time we've taken more money than ever before: 100 pictures have been sold in 10 days. I've never had such a success," claims the 53-year-old former hairdresser.

Miles is one of many who have benefited from one of the most conspicuous by-products of *glasnost*: an escalating flow of Russian art to the west. Since the late 1980s, many major public galleries have mounted large exhibitions of Russian art: Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips now all have Russian departments and private dealers trading in Russian art have multiplied. As the big names of the early Russian avant garde become increasingly scarce, it is to living artists that the western art market has directed its gaze — and its purchasing power. But the expansion into this area of the Russian art market has also made many of its participants *see* red, not least the artists themselves.

The convoluted rules surrounding the payment of artists are widely criticised for encouraging bullish buying tactics. And Soviet financial regulations are also blamed for the fact that more and more artists are leaving the USSR to live and work abroad. Once outside the Soviet Union, artists can be paid in hard currency, but this money also has to be spent beyond the Soviet border. If artists take the risk of

Art dealer Roy Miles: benefiting from glasnost

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"Russian Christmas" bought by Michael Caine from Roy Miles and below, Vladimir Asriev with some of the Red Square team

receiving hard currency within the USSR, they can only use it provided they can smuggle it out of the country. The legitimate form of payment within the USSR is in roubles, together with a permitted ten per cent in hard currency. Unfortunately this money may never arrive since it has to make a haphazard journey through the state financial system.

"Most good artists now don't want to sell for roubles, they want to sell for hard currency. But there is not one law for artists' payment—there are a lot of contradictory practices" says Vladimir Asriev, the Russian co-director of the Red Square Gallery in London which was set up last April "to promote the individuality of Russian art in terms of each individual state and to present it in a non-hysterical context".

Asriev, a classical violinist who held exhibitions of dissident art in his Odessa flat during the sixties and seventies, is sufficiently acquainted with the machinations of the Russian art world to deal directly with his artists and to bring out their work via the artists' cooperative galleries throughout the Soviet Union which have permission to do import-export and to whom he pays a commission in hard currency. While he emphasises that each artist has different requirements and some still like to be paid on the spot in roubles, Asriev prefers to invite his artists to London, having agreed to the standard gallery rate of 50 per cent on sales—"good artists shouldn't go for less" —and to pay the money into bank accounts that he opens for his artists here in London.

Roy Miles varies his procedure according to individual artists. He has arranged for London-based artist Israel Zohar to paint portraits of the American and Soviet ambassadors as well as of the Princess of Wales, and on the occasions that Miles buys up an entire artist's studio, "without exception, everybody's invited to London and

we give them a bloody good time". Within the Soviet Union however, Miles maintains a consistent method of payment: "We always pay the state in advance; we're not interested in doing anything unless it's strictly through the state — we don't want people coming in to us with their work, it's too much trouble". But don't the artists lose out from this system? "Of course the artists have a very heavy time because the state often doesn't pay for at least a year; and the state only gives the artists ten per cent in hard currency," admits Miles, who also confirms that his mark-up will be "at least 100 per cent". "But", he adds, "after six years of seeing misery on the faces of many artists I know may never get paid, I carry a lot of currency and my driver and I spend ten per cent of our time shopping. We go to the big department stores and buy colour televisions."

So what is the appeal of Russian art? Can the recent boom be seen as another manifestation of a hungry western market's desire for the novel and exotic? "A couple of years ago there was interest in this market because it was new and accompanied by *glasnost* and *perestroika*," says Alexander Shlepianov, Phillips's Russian consultant, "but now there is a different situation. Gorbachev has disappointed many and the western market has been over flooded with every kind of Russian art—every housewife has been bringing paintings out to the west." Christie's also feel that "fashion has played a part in inflating the market"; but Roy Miles doesn't think that politics, fashion or a fascination with the unusual have any bearing whatsoever on his burgeoning sales figures. "I think what people really like is that when they buy a Russian painting, it hasn't been a piece of flotsam in and out of the salerooms for the past ten years—it's virgin art, fresh in London."

Just as many Russian artists have discovered that the way to the west is not paved with gold, conversely many British participants now feel that the Soviet honeypot is not as deep as they hoped. Sotheby's may feel that their much publicised sale of "Russian avant garde and contemporary art" which they held in Moscow in July 1988 enables them to "take full credit for the opening of this market", but they have not held a sale devoted to Soviet contemporary art ever since. Phillips's last Russian art sale did not do as well as the first, while Christie's have always avoided dealing solely in contemporary Russian art and probably sum up the attitude of all three auction houses by stating that "at the moment our policy is to wait and see what happens."

Maybe this shift in attitude is a good thing. Recent legislation decreeing that Soviet artists may now take only one work apiece out of the USSR (with large sums charged on any extra pieces) further reduces their bargaining power with the western art market. But Vladimir Asriev is cautiously optimistic about Russian artists encountering a capitalist system. "Russia has always been a country with great literature, great music and great art; it always has been and it always will be. This art boom will disappear and leave a funny taste in the mouth. But just as in the west, good art will attract the attention it deserves".

Contemporary Russian art is showing throughout the summer at the Red Square Gallery, 4 Whitfield St, London W1 and the Roy Miles Gallery, 29 Bruton St, London W1.
There are several shows in Manchester until 22 July: "Leningrad in Manchester" at the City Art Gallery; "Posters of Perestroika" at the Cornerhouse Gallery; "The Russian Lubok: 200 years of popular Prints"/"Bolshevik Posters 1917-25" at the Whitworth Art Gallery.

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Theatre

Soap-speak

Ann McFerran profiles writer Paula Milne

When the Royal Shakespeare Company's dramaturge phoned Paula Milne suggesting she might like to talk to the RSC, he was somewhat nonplussed when she did not immediately respond with the grateful self-importance characteristic of would-be scribblers approached by major companies. Her car was running perfectly, thank you, she said, and her subscription was up-to-date. The puzzled script department persisted, until the misunderstanding, a one-letter difference between the RAC and the RSC, emerged as the root of the communication problem.

Since she created the series *Angels* for the BBC some 16 years ago, Paula Milne has written for television. "I never go to the theatre," she says, emphatically. "And when I say never, I don't mean I go once every couple of months, I mean *never*."

Invitations from the RSC are not to be lightly spurned, Paula realised, "But I wasn't sure that I knew how to engage a theatre audience, and I certainly didn't want to be one of those writers who waits a lifetime for that call, and then writes something terribly self-illuminating, which means absolutely nothing to anyone else."

Recently, Paula had become increasingly concerned about the effects of deregulation on television. A member of the Campaign for Quality Television, Paula felt, "We still have the best TV in the world, but if satellite takes over I fear we'll exist on a diet of games shows and American imports." The RSC offered a creative diversion from what Paula describes as "my unholy alliance with television, where I was so monogomous to this capricious, powerful, uncaring spouse."

The television writer abandoned her wayward partner to continue its flatulent self-abuse with satellite floosies, and accepted the RSC's commission. Television, however, was never far from her thoughts: "Writers are always at their strongest when they're writing about what they know," she says, without a hint of apology. "I've got a lot out of television, so I want to give something back."

When audiences enter the Pit to see Paula Milne's first stage play **EARWIG**, they will find that the theatre has been transformed into a television studio. They will pick their way around TV cameras to reach their seats, to be told by a bossy young woman to sit down, be quiet and line up for a shot. She is the director's assistant, and when the house lights dim the audience will find themselves watching the story of Glynis, a Fay Weldon style writer, who is at her wits' end as to how she can survive with "an overdraft the size of the national debt, two children at Bedales and an ex-husband in therapy". No publisher will touch her latest feminist novel, but although she swears she will never bring herself to write "tawdry palliative bullshit for menopausal women on tranquillisers"—or soaps—within 16 brief television-length scenes, Glynis finds an ingenious way of protecting her literary and feminist credentials— and bringing home the bacon. The fruits of her (often midnight) labours, an ingratiatingly ludicrous soap entitled "The Corner Shop" appears on a monitor above our heads.

Lisa Harrow and Geoffrey Freshwater in Paula Milne's "EARWIG"

To explain more would spoil a carefully crafted plot, which reveals the skilled hand of a writer thoroughly drilled in the art of prime-time soap. But what gives the play its political punch is that Glynis's will-she, won't-she-pull-it-off tale of artistic duplicity is actually the storyline of a script conference which is trying to make a soap about a feminist writer.

Their ultimate hurdle is EARWIG, a computer which estimates audience reaction and can axe a show before it is transmitted. *EARWIG* exposes cliffhangers without enough tenterhooks to keep the viewers agog until the next episode, and registers its disapproval when a story lacks enough sex—or at least URST (unresolved sexual tension)—to sustain viewing figures in double figures.

EARWIG is set in TV's deregulated future, but its dramatic strength and wit is drawn from Paula's past when she wrote scripts for *Coronation Street, Z Cars* and *Juliet Bravo*. Paula's own experiences are divided between her heroine Glynis and "the angry, angst-ridden" scriptwriter, Bill who, in one memorable diatribe, describes soaps as "a kind of social services, which help the viewer to escape the dreary problems of their lives, by showing other people making even more of a cock-up of their lives than they are." *EARWIG*'s script conferences are based on those she attended as a *Coronation Street* writer.

"As an apprenticeship for writing television scripts, *Coronation Street* couldn't be better," Paula concedes. "You learnt how to write comedy and to make a piece accessible." But when it came to writing those 23-minute-long scripts for as many as 18 characters: "I discovered I was angrier than I thought. I didn't like writing the bizarre individual who suddenly goes mad; I wanted to show why he goes off the rails, and that the way people behave is often a long and complicated result of social conditions." Most of all she resented the way that soaps exploit dramatic incident rather than exploring its consequences: "You'd write a rape scene, but two weeks later, you couldn't follow through why this woman might be looking rather depressed, because it was all was-she, wasn't-she?" The restrictive narrative form of soaps and a three month transmission time-lag mean that characters inhabit a never-never land, removed from social and political reality: "Governments might fall; volcanoes erupt and earthquakes shatter, but they never affected *Coronation Street*," says Paula, her voice perceptibly wearying at the memory of her efforts to squeeze a little realpolitik between matey pints and Hilda Ogden's tittle-tattle. "Yes, I really did try to have characters popping into the Rover's Return to talk about Cruise, but it just didn't wash. Of course people *do* go into pubs and talk about whatever comes into their heads, but although as writers we could divine that they do the most ridiculous things we couldn't have them talking about, say racial tension, because that was 'out of character', and there weren't any black characters, anyway. It was pointless spending my life fighting such a well-oiled production machine, so I became a good little trouper."

After two years, the trouper also became battle fatigued: "I began to develop an authorial voice with ideas and words that I didn't want to put in the mouth of Bet Lynch." She left the hermetic world of soaps to write television plays and serials. Her latest serial, *Die Kinder*, a political thriller, starring Miranda Richardson, from Michael Wearing's exclusive stable, leads this autumn's TV schedules on BBC2.

Like her heroine Glynis, Paula Milne is forthright, warmhearted, leftish and blisteringly honest. An unsentimental pragmatist, she believes that soaps serve their purpose: "But I do believe that they deserve better than what they're getting. It should be possible to validate people's experience and give them enough truth, without soaps being turgid and anodyne. *Brookside* and *EastEnders* have honourably tried to push the soap form, but their attempts tend to become institutionalised."

Isn't a play which exposes the unpalatable truths of soap-speak a self-destructive snap at the hand which has fed Paula—and her four children—over the last 16 years? Paula grins wryly, remarking that her play probably won't even register with the executives at TV centre: soaps reach an estimated 16 million people, but *EARWIG* will be seen by the merest fraction of that audience.

Paula Milne's "EARWIG" opens on 12 July at London's Barbican Centre

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Film

Against the sober grain

Suzanne Moore on camping up the mainstream

Pedro Almodóvar, Spanish director of the much acclaimed *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, seems to be all things to all men. The National Film Theatre, which is currently featuring a season of his work, describes him as "a wonder kid" though the man is pushing 40. Alexander Walker dubs him an "Iberian buffoon" in the *Evening Standard*, which is a sure sign that Almodóvar is doing something right. Anyway, how can you resist a man who once made a film with the poetic title of *Fuck, Fuck, Fuck Me, Tim*? He has been touted variously as the new John Waters, a sucessor to Bunuel and "a woman's director". Negotiations are under way for *Women on the Verge* to be remade as a star vehicle for the newly divorced and de-ribbed Jane Fonda.

What Hollywood will do with him is anyone's guess. For a start, one of the best things about his films is that they go completely against the current clean and sober craze that permeates every other American movie. His characters have all kinds of sex and take all kinds of drugs as a matter of routine rather than regret. And his latest film **Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down** has been given an X certificate in the States, a category usually reserved for pornography, though it is still managing to do good business.

Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down arrives here, dripping with controversy. The press have talked of "German feminists" storming out of the film at the Berlin Film Festival, conjuring up the usual image of dour dungareed types, while Almodóvar has played the part of the misunderstood film director with great charm. It is the basic storyline of the film which has given so much offence. Ricki (Antonio Banderas) is a 23 year old who has spent most of his life in institutions. When released from a psychiatric hospital, he goes straight to a filmset in order to woo Marina (Victoria Abril), the woman of his dreams. She is a B-movie star, an ex-porn actress and ex-junkie, who has already spent a night with Ricki though she can't remember it. He breaks into her apartment, hits her and ties her to the bed, waiting for her to reciprocate his love.

And she does, even at one point asking to be tied up. Is this a savage dissection of marriage or a paean to female masochism indicated by the Sacred Heart pictures in the title sequence? And, more importantly, can Almodóvar, previously acclaimed for his empathy with women, get away with it?

Well, you want him to, not only because no one else is making films about things like this, but also because no one else is making films that look like this. Almodóvar finds colours and faces that you never usually see on the screen: all those wonderful blues and oranges, all those beautifully ugly faces you could look at for ever. His films hover somewhere between reality, fantasy and wish fulfilment. So as Ricki tracks down Marina, who is already being pursued by the wheelchair-bound director of her film, you want it all to work out. He ties her up so tenderly, buying special tape to gag her with. He goes out to buy her drugs to take the edge off the pain of her toothache. He busies himself with small domestic tasks—a new washer for the tap—as he tells us he just wants to marry her and have babies. And when he comes home after being beaten up himself, in a fine parody of every wounded man sequence from the Bible to the classic western, they make bruised love until Marina realises that this is the man for her.

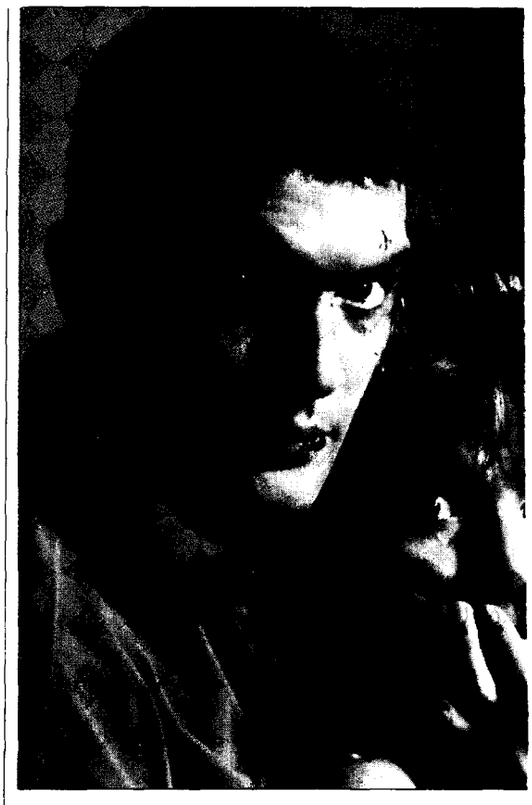
It helps no doubt, that the man who has kidnapped her is a good-looking hunk. It also probably helps that Marina appears to have no life of her own. Yet it is her pragmatic acceptance of the situation that rings true only at the level of pure fantasy. Though Almodóvar doesn't flinch in showing us the violence, I flinched when I saw it. As Ricki pushes her through the door he hits her hard enough to break a tooth. While Almodóvar plays with his cinematic references, including *Dressed to Kill*, Marina is not just playing at being a woman in peril. She *is* a woman in peril.

This is something that Almodóvar's camp sensibility cannot recognise. Despite the presence of the feisty Lola, Marina's sister, and an upbeat ending, *Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down* is an uneasy film, almost aware of its own limitations. Almodóvar has dismissed criticisms of the film as "crude and primitive" and yet his defence has been equally naive. The ropes that Ricki ties Marina up with, he has insisted, are a simple metaphor for the ties that bind any two people together. All relationships involve mutual constraints.

What Almodóvar sacrifices on the altar of passionate camp is the question of power

While it may be the case that feminists have shied away from dealing with the murky area of female masochism, this graphic representation of it in the name of a love story, cannot help but jar. This may be why Almodóvar has been accused of staging a homosexual fantasy using a heterosexual couple.

Maybe it's a heterosexual fantasy that power relations magically vanish between people of the same sex, but such an imbalance of power would not be so politically or physically loaded. After all, Ricki is a big man and Marina a small woman. But Almodóvar wants to discuss passion not politics. Passion is his god. Passion is seemingly oblivious to the machinations of gender—it obliterates such details in its irrational quest. His company is called appropriately enough, El Deseo.



Camp sensibilities: Ricki and Marina in "Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down" and, right, bad taste supremo John Waters

A few years ago, even in this bleak land, desire became an intellectual buzz word. You couldn't move for books or talks with the word "desire" in the title. Rooms full of people would nod seriously as some French philospher would spout on about the impossibility of desire, as though being told that you would never have what you wanted was the most enjoyable thing in the world. Eventually however, it became clear that even such an unbounded psychoanalytic concept had its boundaries. That there were other things to consider. Like who gets to express their desire and how.

In other words, desire or passion may feel transgressive, able to cut through social systems, but they are still as much a part of that system as anything else. What Almodóvar sacrifices on the altar of passionate camp is the question of power. But, as Sontag wrote in her seminal *Notes on Camp*, camp incarnates a victory of aethestics over morality. And: "It goes without saying that the camp sensibility is disengaged, depoliticised—or at least apolitical."

Nowadays camp is moving fast into the mainstream. Everyone knows what it is. Yet, at the same time, it is still held up to be subversive—it relies on artifice; postmodern long before the word was invented. But as we all become more fluent in the language of camp (Almodóvar's and John Waters's success, among others, bear witness to this), it's worth asking just how disruptive this "sensibility" is. While the radical edge of camp allows us to change the world, if only superficially, *Tie Me up, Tie Me Down* asks us only to accept it.

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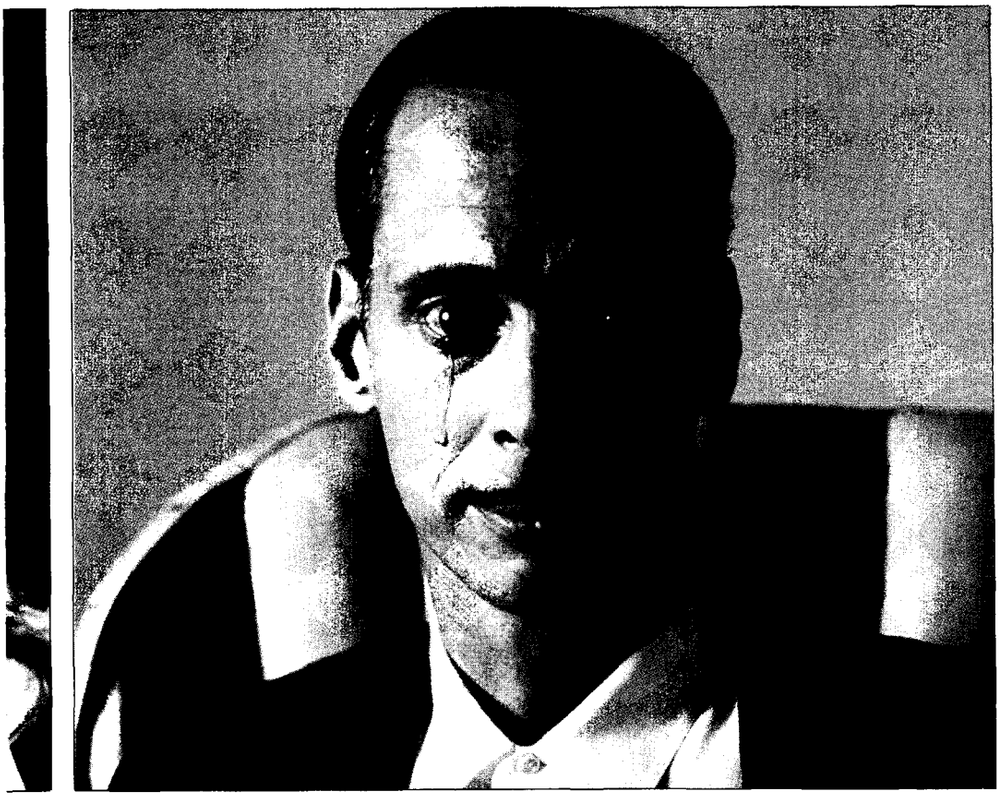

Interview

The filthiest man in the world

Ben Thompson talks to wild film director John Waters

When teaching his film class at Baltimore's maximum security prison, John Waters would tell a captive audience: "These films are my crimes, only I get paid instead of doing time." The Florida Grand Jury which recently joined the long list to have sat through his 1972 monument of depravity *Pink Flamingos* (hailed by *Variety* as "one of the most vile, stupid and repulsive films ever made") and pronounced itself disgusted, would probably agree. Graciously, Mr Waters accepts their dilemma—"They didn't really have much choice; a singing asshole? In Florida? If they'd said they thought it was funny they would have been arrested."

John Waters's reputation for outraging tender sensibilities has long been second to none, but his two most recent films—1988's teenage civil rights message movie *Hairspray* and now *Cry Baby* (which opens in London next week), the exuberant juvenile delinquent musical romance whose imminent release is the cause of his presence in London—go far beyond shock value. The ceaseless urbanity and fastidiously trimmed pencil moustache, which "the filthiest man in the world" has always exhibited in the flesh, are now supplemented by the allure of massive popular success. His home town of Baltimore, where all his films have been made, has even taken its most errant son to its heart, proclaiming a "John Waters day".

This move into the mainstream—"where unsuspecting people go see a movie at their neighbourhood mall with their families that says you can be a juvenile delinquent and end up happy without being punished at the end"—is by far the most outrageous and subversive act of Waters's career. It's just a shame that Divine, his friend and partner in aesthetic outrage, who ate poodle droppings, was raped by a 15 foot lobster, and impersonated Jackie Kennedy at her husband's assassination in earlier masterworks, died before he could fully share in it.

Where his earlier films built up their own star system from within Baltimore's unique storehouse of misfits and mavericks, John Waters's new-found financial and artistic clout has enabled him to indulge his abundant sense of casting irony on a broader canvas. The cast of *Cry Baby* consequently boasts real-life teen idol Johnny Depp, punk rock grand-daddy Iggy Pop, numerous former stalwarts of daytime TV and Warhol's factory, and—best of all—Patty Hearst as a concerned mother and conscientious lollipop lady.

"All the people that I've used, the thing they have in common is that there's no one like them ... who's a Patty Hearst type, you know— the Lindbergh baby? There's nobody to top Patty Hearst in that direction...even if Myra Hindley said yes it would be funny—well it would be to some people but I'm not sure that using Myra Hindley wouldn't be *bad* bad taste," (the distinction between good and bad taste has furnished John Waters with the material for several books and numerous lecture-tours) "if I ever did use her she would play a nun, really, a good person that helped people..."

The extent of Waters's interest in the darker areas of human behavious—his penchant for attending murder trails, the replica of an electric chair in his hall way, his jar of soil from a serial killer's basement—can be more than a little unsettling. Apparently, throwaway lines such as "Murderers make really good friends" are not just evidence of his delight in shocking people or his rejection of the respectability of his suburdan orgin, ("I knew I was a 'square' but I desperately wanted to be a 'drape'"), but are genuinely meant. "Maybe because I think it could've been me or anybody else that was in their place. If I hadn't got to make movies or had other outlets for the thoughts in my head, what would have happened to me?"

John Waters's films have as clear a divide between good and evil as any TV evangelist could wish for. His "good guys" are "people who don't judge others and are happy with themselves" and, however much society disapproves of them, they always come out on top. Would it be fair to say that his work takes the spurious moral absolutism of much American cinema and reverses it? "That's too intellectual. What it really came from was Backwards Day at summer camp. They picked us up in the morning in reverse order, we had to wear our clothes backwards, we had dinner first then breakfast, we had to walk around backwards; we did everything in reverse and that always appealed."

Backwards Day was not the only aspect of growing up in Baltimore to have a lasting effect on John Waters. There was also Catholic Sunday school. "I remember the thrill of hearing the nuns read the names of condemned movies out loud—like *The Bed*, *Love is my Profession*, *Baby Doll*; it was like blasphemy, it was great; even when I was very young I knew I had to see those movies." And to make them.

Waters's "exploitation films for intellectuals" sprang initially from the scandalous innovation of the drive-in and the underground art explorations of Andy Warhol and Kenneth Anger. Did he see these two strands as in any way different? "They were the same; I loved them both, but it wasn't just them. It was the Walt Disney movies with the best villains. Ingmar Bergman because of his early severe movies like *Brink of Light* which I loved for real—the first childhood memory he ever had was vomiting, that's scary—those influences were all put together".

Now gone gloriously populist, his new films have a simple delight in their own existence, which, alongside their dazzling irony, puts the body of Hollywoo's retro output to shame. For all Waters's protestations—"I'm never saying I liked the fifties, the fifties were horrible...it was like today; you couldn't have sex, kids were conservative"—there is also an element of nostalgia for times when, as he puts it, "better rebellion happened". As befits a grown-up iconoclast, he takes a dim view of America's new breed of TV and radio shockers, men like Andrew "Dice" Clay. "Lenny Bruce they're not: our parents thought like they think, that's what we fought against—that's old-fashioned."

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Sarah McDonald

Miscarriages of justice

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Christopher Price

What is it about the English faced with the Irish? With an "Irish" issue at stake, Englishmen of high and low degree, from the senior judiciary, through the ministers, civil servants, scientists, journalists purporting to specialise in "crime", policemen and prison officers have a century-old track record of criminal behaviour. They will indulge in conspiracy, perjury, sadism, duplicity, or fraud to convict innocent folk and keep the scandal under wraps.

Perhaps they feel they are doing their duty in extracting eyes for eyes and teeth for teeth in retaliation for IRA atrocities. Perhaps the phenomenon is of their racial origin—an uptight Germanic species, still prisoners within the super-ego of their imperial past and driven frantic by the thought of a free and poetic Hibernian race, laughing (and shooting) at them over the generations. Whatever it is, it has fatally polluted our constitutional process.

Gerry Conlon and Paul Hill, two of the Guildford Four, had "confessions" bullied and beaten out of them which sent them and two other friends to vicious jail conditions for 15 years and drew seven others, members of the Maguire family who were relations of Gerry Conlon, into long prison sentences. Kevin Taylor, a Manchester businessman, escaped jail—just. He later learnt, after the police had engineered his bankruptcy but lost a trumped-up prosecution, that he had been picked almost by chance to be an accessory to remove his friend, John Stalker, from the "shoot to kill" inquiry in Northern Ireland. The police nearly fitted up a couple of Irish businessmen instead but chose Taylor as a softer target.

Hill and Conlon's stories tell of the English gulag from Strangeways to Wormwood Scrubs. They thank others profusely for their help; but the real heroes are the authors themselves, who refused to have their spirits broken. Through their own internal spiritual reserves, with a deal of help from friendly prisoner comrades and the prison library service, they made up for their lack of schooling on the Falls Road. Conlon read the *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*; Hill had longer in solitary and read more widely—Kafka, Zola, Dickens, Edgar Alan Poe, Simone de Beauvoir, George Jackson. Each book sheds acute insights into the roots of our

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rotten prison system. Each is dissatisfyingly short. But for the publishers, Conlon said, his would have been as long as *War and Peace*.

The secondary heroes are the authors, journalists, television producers, lawyers (solicitors, not barristers) and even a few MPs (though not the opposition front bench) who, in the end, blew the lid off the pressure cooker. Without two hyperactive solicitors who kept faith throughout, Alistair Logan and Gareth Pierce, victory for the Guildford Four would have been much harder; Kevin Taylor was lucky enough to come across a raffish, temporarily defrocked solicitor, called Charles Buckley, who offered unrivalled legal advice—in particular, on how to sue James Anderton, Chief Constable of Manchester, for criminal conspiracy. The case made excellent progress until it was surprisingly halted in its tracks, on judicial review, by a distinguished high court judge called Sir John May.

The barristers come out, on the whole, as complacent and collusive. Although the Department of Public Prosecutions had despatched to Manchester Britain's most expensive silk, Michael Corkery QC, to convict him, Kevin Taylor sniffed danger and sacked his own London QC, relying on his local junior, David Hood, to expose the corruption. His instincts were right. Too many barristers equate justice with the legal system off which they earn their fees.

A judicial inquiry has now been launched—under Sir John May—and has heard evidence in public on the Maguires. The headlines have cast the scientists in the role of incompetents; but more sinister has been the evidence of the prosecution lawyers, Michael Hill and Paul Purnell, in denying evidence to the defence until the very last moment on the grounds of "security".

The inquiry is now stalled until the police and the DPP decide whether to prosecute some junior policemen. Far from exorcising ghosts, such trials will only generate further questions about the behaviour of senior policemen. Nor will the flow of the truth stop there. When Kevin Taylor sues the Manchester police again, even nastier conspiracies will come to light. When the Birmingham Six get out, their books will sell like hot cakes. When May reports there will be more TV investigations, more drama documentaries.

These three books put the record straight; but their message is also a critique of our crumbling legal constitution led by hollow men. If remedies are to come, they must lie in both men and measures. May will propose some of the latter—to sharpen up considerations of miscarriages of justice, a few more curbs on police malpractice, tougher rules of "discovery" for lawyers. Lord Justice Woolf will try to ameliorate prison regimes with recommendations on sanitation and education. Of the men, some will pass on soon. Anderton will retire from Manchester, and Donaldson and Lane leave the appeal court. But the endemic poison will remain in the tree while the Irish question remains unresolved and Britain's secret state remains impervious to reform.

No one has yet apologised to the Guildford Four. This inability on high to say "sorry" gives the lie to the popular wisdom that the generality of those involved in these conspiracies are "good men, only doing their duty". Some, certainly, are not very bright; but all three books make it clear that many at the top are guilty men (none are women), unfit for public service in any civilised country, least of all an established democracy that purports to criticise the former dictatorships of eastern Europe. As long as these men continue to run the administrative, judicial and custodial arms of the English state, we need Kevin Taylor, Paul Hill and Gerry Conlon to remind us of the sort of country we live in.

Marvellous to be a woman?

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SEDUCTION
Jean Baudrillard (translated by Brian Singer)
Macmillan £8.99 paperback/£30 hardback

Rosalind Coward

In the heyday of Paris as the centre of political, literary and psychoanalytic theory, Jean Baudrillard was a minor star in a dazzling galaxy. But since the 1970s, his more luminous colleagues have met with a series of rather bizarre ends, leaving him with a great deal more prominence than he really deserves. Baudrillard's melancholic postmodernism (doctors would probably call it depression) is particularly rated in America which, in my opinion, shows a lack of judgment on their part.

The two latest offerings of Baudrillard in English are *Seduction* and *Cool Memories*. *Seduction* was written in the late seventies but never previously translated, while *Cool Memories* is a diary, mainly written in the early eighties and largely following the usual academic junket round "Rome, Berlin, Sydney, New York, Rio". *Seduction* probably wouldn't have been translated into English when it was first written but is obviously now more suited to the times. As the editors (Arthur and Marilouise Kroker) of the series in which it is included declare, it belongs to the "creative explorations in theory, politics and culture at the *fin-de-millénium*" and is part of the "forward breaking edge of postmodern theory and practice".

Baudrillard's main claim to fame as a postmodern theorist is that he is said to challenge the received "truths" of psychoanalysis, Marxism and feminism. But as these two new books make clear, it is feminism which really gets him going. Like Foucault before him, Baudrillard objected to a movement which looked for "liberation", assuming that there was some "truth" to sex which had previously been repressed or denied. In Baudrillard's eyes, feminism is not an oppositional ideology but part of the same cultural imperative to render those things visible and knowable which should properly belong to "the game", "the reversible". To attempt to know, understand or transform sexuality is a process of production, and "to produce is to materialise by force what belongs to another order, that of the secret and seduction".

Seduction is Baudrillard's supposedly subversive and radical alternative to the cultural imperative. "Seduction is at all times and in all places opposed to production. Seduction removes something from the visible, while production constructs everything in full view, be it an object or a concept." This leads Baudrillard into a violent polemic against pornography, as belonging to the imperative which probes and tries to render visible: "Our entire body culture, with its concern for the the 'expression' of the body's desire, is a culture of irredeemable monstrosity and obscenity." But it also leads to a tirade against feminism for suggesting that the relationship between men and women is a relationship of power and exclusion, when "all sexuality is only a montage or simulacrum which has always been traversed, thwarted and exceeded by actual practice".

There clearly is a way critical theories of sexuality have not kept pace with popular perception that there is more at stake in terms of desire, complicity and so on than a simple polarity between an oppressed sex and a dominant one. But Baudrillard's attack on the theoretical certainties around sexuality does little to help understanding in this area. When it comes to it, his concept of seduction is not a fluid, subversive, radical concept but a grand term under which he can wallow in nostalgia for a lost subtlety between (always) men and women, "that ideality of seduction in which the difference between the sexes appears like a subtle and aesthetic clue to the duality of things, an innovation, a surprise before the manichean violence of sex erupts".

But even worse than the nostalgia is Baudrillard's concept of seduction, which is often little more than an excuse for some nauseating, dated fantasies about women, like "the success of the erotic hallucination of the feminine (even for women) comes from the translucidity of those arses, their perfection as objects of idolatry"; or, "The moving moment is the one when a woman takes off her shoes and suddenly becomes smaller before your eyes. She becomes marvellously tiny, and at the same time, her face changes. She creates intimacy in its most seductive form."

Baudrillard's startling refutation of feminism is that these tiny, high-heeled creatures are powerful. In his view, it is femininity which seduces and therefore decides whether or not men are to be allowed the illusion of being the seducers: "Better than those women who climax are those who give the impression of climaxing, but maintain a sort of distance and virginity beneath the pretence of pleasure for they oblige us with the offer of rape." And because Baudrillard believes women to be powerful, he can wallow in yet another popular fantasy: "It must be nice to live in bodies so beautiful, so ingenuous, and allow the men to dominate you with all their ugliness, wealth and pretensions. It must be marvellous to be a woman."

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You recognise these ideas perhaps? You've heard the same views spouted by Norman Mailer, Joan Collins, or, more recently, Julie Burchill? Of course, in postmodernism, we have to steel ourselves to "cultural borrowings" rather than a coherent theory. But it comes as something of a disappointment to find the "truths" of Marx and Freud replaced by the tawdry clichés of that mob.

No wonder Baudrillard is going down a bomb. What better than a French philosopher, once part of a fashionable intellectual scene, giving philosophical and theoretical credence to that great contemporary obsession—masochistic submission? What better than to find those who have dabbled in Marx and Freud now giving all their approval to the idea that it is men not women who are enslaved, and that women are powerful in the play of seduction? How depressing to find that Baudrillard's greatest praise is for a "sublime epigraph on seduction in Omar Khayyam": "It is better to have reduced a single free man to slavery by gentleness than to have freed one thousand slaves."

Isolation and despair

THE AFTERNOON OF A WRITER
Peter Handke (translated by Ralph Mannheim)
Methuen £11.99
THE DISTANT LOVER
Christoph Hein (translated by Krishna Winston)
Picador £11.95

Carole Angier

Kafka, Camus & Co have a lot to answer for. Here are two good writers, famous in their own lands, well known (in Handke's case) even here. And what do they write? Alienated, isolated little books about alienation and isolation. I think we are meant to pity and admire Handke's writer, to pity and deplore Hein's doctor. But I couldn't feel anything for either but their own distaste and boredom.

Peter Handke is an Austrian, best known in England for his plays (for example, *Kaspar*, *The Ride across Lake Constance*, *The Long Way Round*). To judge by this book, he shares the Austrian literary tradition of hatred of Austria (Kraus, Bernhard, Canetti). But then he, or his narrator, hates everyone. Recently he has had a time when he "lost contact with language", and evidently with people; now he lives in fear of "not being able to go on", with writing, walking, everything.

But there isn't much left. He hardly talks to anyone and doesn't listen when they talk to him; when someone tries to tell him his life story he "blacks out" (not a promising habit in a novelist). Strangers keep sending him obscure cries for help—a foreign letter-writer, a mad old woman, a distressed newscaster. But the last person he rescued was a little boy a year before—who is perhaps only an image of himself. Everything else is. He imagines every conversation to be about him, and most against him. This is, he thinks, because people detest "handmade writing, dissent and ultimately art."

But this is humbug. People—or I—do not detest art, only this sort of art, made, like the translator's "Ur-text" here, out of the writer's entrails alone. The translator feels this is not enough. The writer fears it, but still holds to his creed: "Work is something in which material is next to nothing, structure almost everything," he says; and, "Emptiness, my guiding principle. Emptiness, my beloved." If you like that kind of thing you'll like this book.

There's more in the Hein than the Handke, but not much more. Our narrator is at least given an age, a name (in the blurb; I couldn't find it in the text), a named country (East Germany, like Hein's), a family, a few acquaintances, a lover. She is distant from all of these, but at least her distance has some richness, some detail. (Her non-relationship with her parents, for instance: "I asked how Father was doing, after which we said good-bye. Then she asked whether there was anything else, and then she said good-bye again. After that she gave me Father's love, and we said good-bye for the third time.")

The trouble is that the detail is uniformly horrible. Her block of flats houses only old people and single people; no birds visit it and no plants grow in it; the rooms are so small and so uniform that everyone's furniture has to go in exactly the same place. The people are all horrible, too, the women degraded and pathetic, the men bored and cruel.

Claudia's distant lover, Henry, is so bored that he constantly courts danger in order to feel alive; in the short space of the book he gets into two fights and two car crashes, and we know from the start that he will die. Claudia refuses to succumb to any feeling or connection; she thinks of them as abuse of herself or the other, and is dismayed by her temptation to feel them for Henry. She rejects all introspection: "Repression is self-defence, designed to help the organism exist"; our bad memories are our "personal radioactive waste", "with which we can live only if we entomb it... in inaccessible oblivion".

Yet Claudia does remember; she returns to the town in which she grew up, and remembers her only friend, the only person she ever loved, but also betrayed. Now we know why she is so distant, so dead; why indeed everyone in the book is so dull and dead, their hearts and consciences poisoned by decades of betrayal and silence.

If *The Distant Lover* is at all accurate about the DDR, the reunification of Germany will bring into the heart of Europe a deeper disturbance than the merely economic. But then *The Afternoon of a Writer* suggests there is one there already. Too much freedom evidently has the same result as too much oppression: the breakdown of the fragile bonds between people; isolation and despair. These are, it seems, the human condition. At any rate that is what these two dismal little books leave you feeling.

Spilling the beans

DOG EAT DOG; CONFESSIONS OF A TABLOID JOURNALIST
Wensley Clarkson
Fourth Estate £12.95

Martyn Harris

Debonair, daredevil, dastardly Wensley Clarkson, 33 year old father of four (check age later), lifts the lid and spills the beans on Fleet Street in this blow-by-blow exposé of rat-pack journalism—to say the least!

Wense, as he's dubbed by his fellow scribes, has been a full-time hack since leaving public school at 15 with nothing but three O-levels and a blunted moral sense. He's worked on the *Sunday Mirror*, *Mail on Sunday*, the *Sun* and other rags of the Street of Shame. He's tucked into prawn cocktails, munched steaks, quaffed Blue Nun and fiddled expenses alongside Fleet Street's finest. But that was the dark and distant past. Fleet Street's Wense is now TV's Wense, a wealthy and successful producer of commercials, living with dishy wife Clare in his posh west London pad, where he now tells all.

Toffee-nosed so-called quality papers may sneer, and jumped up johnnies like Calcutt and Blom-Cooper may fume. But we know its damned hard in the tabloid press, don't we, chums? Discover *how* tough in the yarn of Wense's nightmare dash to beard hard-boozing bruiser Oliver Reed in his Bahamas lovenest. Fur and feathers fly when Wense breaks in to Ollie's lair, but when he gets the interview that counts with Ollie's teenage sex kitten it all ends up just purrfect. Or there's the knife-edge suspense of Wense's mercy dash to Portugal to quiz Madonna of the Mountains, Maria Viera, a pale-faced, pious mother of none, who's not eaten or drunk for six years. Wense is flabbergasted to find she's out to lunch when he jets in, but he makes up the interview anyway—a tried and trusted trick—and scoops the world.

Braving club class once again, and suavely shrugging off the ardours of five-star hotels, Wense flies into Algiers in quest of tear-stained Margaret Thatcher's missing Mark. The lost boy is still 2,000 miles away in a place "with a name that sounded like Taramasalata" (nhyar, nhyar) but Wense phones up his shapely blonde co-driver (Mark's in a "strong position" with her—nhyar, nhyar), and scoops another story. He could have phoned her from London, but tabloids like the pretence of being newspapers, and besides, where would his expenses be then? Basically, when news editor P.J. Wilson has a word in Wense's shell-like, our boy gets his skates on and hits the road, whether it's checking out the royal sex train story (were there princely turds on the track?), buying up a sex-swap couple, or doorstepping a newly widowed man who drops dead from a heart attack the next day (pity that).

Enough! The only hard part of this type of

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tabloid hackery is writing in cobbled-together clichés about absolutely fuck all. The rest is lying, cheating, bluster and a certain pained innocence when you are caught. There isn't a fact, a scoop or an exclusive in this whole book that's worth tuppence. Most of the malicious tittle tattle which passes for "stories" is invented, and I doubt if Clarkson was paid less than £50,000 year to obtain it, or more precisely "make it stand up". The book's only interest is its appalling frankness, which is also disgusting in that it implies a contempt for his hardback readership as great as the contempt which Wense clearly holds for the "brainless millions" who read the tabloids.

Weep at the heartlessness and sigh at the stupidity and pointlessness, but if Wense's "titanic struggles" with the rudiments of the English language fail to make you "laugh profusely" you're probably at one with his "revered editor", P. J. Wilson, who rewrote all his stories anyway. A pity he didn't rewrite this load of old crap.

The right balance

THE CAMBRIDGE SOCIAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN, 1750-1950: VOL 1, REGIONS AND COMMUNITIES; VOL 2, PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT; VOL 3, SOCIAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS
F.M.L. Thompson (editor)
Cambridge University Press
£45 (vol 1)/£40 (vols 2 and 3)

Roy Porter

Social history is at last ceasing to be the Cinderella of scholarship, and these fine volumes will do much to help raise it to its rightful place in the palace of academe. Uniformly lucid and erudite, Professor Thompson's crew of some two dozen leading historians together present a coherent succession of first-rate thematic syntheses of the latest research. The balance is right. For the student, there is sufficient density of detail to render this (once Cambridge University Press launch into paperback) an admirable basic text; while bold revisionism and scholarly joisting give real intellectual distinction to the enterprise.

Most contributors clearly saw their brief as being to provide a comprehensive, chronological survey of key developments in such specialist fields as population or religion. Several pieces written to these specifications are quite outstanding. In successive chapters, Pat Thane and Jose Harris provide masterly overviews of the interplay between state and society in the era of the rise of parliamentary democracy and party politics.

Inevitably, though, it is the more historiographically *engagé* pieces, those risking iconoclastic generalisations, which specially catch the eye. Surveying crime, V.A.C. Gatrell lands a right to the chin of the leftish historiography disposed to romanticise criminality as social protest, while dealing a knock-out left to anyone naive enough to suppose that the advent of modern policing, from Peel onwards, has done anything but exacerbate the crime problem. No less pugnaciously, Patrick Joyce's analysis of the world of work will have no truck with the simple Marxist claim that the shop-floor was the most authentic battleground of the class struggle.

Obviously, a collective *opus* such as this stands or falls on the carving up of its subject. Here Professor Thompson has evidently taken some bold decisions, and the result is original and largely successful. Not (as one might expect) social structure, conflict and change, but *socio-geography* sets the agenda for the opening volume. Due emphasis is thus given to the unevenness of the development of the various socio-economies of Scotland, Wales and the major regions of England. Even so, the absence from these 1,500 pages of explicit chapters on the grandees, the bourgeoisie and the working classes can hardly avoid wearing a certain air of wilfulness. No "people's history" here, and little history "from below".

Other presences are welcome, including lively chapters on housing, education, leisure and health. But in some respects, too few concessions have been made to latest scholarly trends (were they thought *too* trendy?). There is, conspicuously, no chapter on women, or, more broadly, on sex and gender: surely the intensity of current research in these areas would alone have have justified inclusion. Childhood is omitted, and there is little on experiences of socialisation. And though Leonore Davidoff's survey of the family is a breathtaking *tour de force*, even she can't cram all aspects of familial relations into 60 pages.

No chapter has been assigned specifically to literacy, or to communications and the media; and neither the histories of consciousness, of culture (high-, middle-, or low-brow), or of things (material history, consumerism) get more than passing mention. The result is that the stupendous transformations of the material environment and the fabric of daily living which were wrought by industrialisation are nowhere fully evoked. Equally surprising, the springs of social wealth, power and prestige are hardly analysed.

Nevertheless, presences far outweigh absences. It would be foolish to expect collective endeavours of this kind to establish total interpretations. Their job—expertly done here—is to assemble the components. Arranging them into patterns is a pleasure in store for all readers of this landmark work.

Reconstructing the strike

SEEING AND BELIEVING: THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION
Greg Philo
Routledge £10.99 paperback/£30 hardback

Jean Seaton

Obviously, if people took television seriously the nation's collective consciousness would long ago have turned to porridge. If seeing really was believing, we would presumably have absorbed the glutinous suburban values of Australo-American sit-com into our own lives, and come to regard a royal broken arm or a pussy-cat rescued from a tree as comparable in importance to the topics which compete with them for air time on the news, like major earthquakes or revolutions.

By the same token, in Romania before the revolution—where the media were totally controlled by the machinery of state propaganda—the population would have been fully indoctrinated in the belief that the sun shone out of Nicolae Ceausescu's orifices, and that his wife and the Virgin Mary had much in common. Luckily, the power of even the most powerful medium to corrupt has never been total, as the collapse of the totalitarian regimes has shown.

The interesting question is whether the drip-drip effect of television bias or unconscious presumption has *any* effect on the way people think, or—as apparently in east Europe—is so much water off a robust and cynical public's back. The Glasgow Media Group, of which Greg Philo is the enterprising and pioneering research director, has built up its reputation with its series of *Bad News* studies by apparently showing, not only that the British press is systematically biased in a right-wing direction (partly through its choice of subject-matter, and partly through its choice of language), but also that this matters. This volume is another salvo in the Glasgow bombardment.

The title, as a matter of fact, is a bit of media or publishing distortion in itself. Rather than a book about the influence of television in general, this is really a write-up of one small, though interesting research experiment, in which a number of people in various social, occupational and regional categories were tested by well-tried psychological means for their recollections of, and reactions to, television coverage of the 1984-5 miners' strike a year after the event. The people in the sample were asked to write their own news bulletins about the strike, around a set of evocative pictures handed to them—images of Arthur Scargill, Ian MacGregor, crowd scenes and so on.

They were also shown—a smart ploy, this—a picture of a gun. Guns, of course, had nothing to do with the British miners' strike, but they are a very powerful symbol of aggression and the interesting question was what the subjects would do with it. Philo regards it as very significant—in terms of the supposedly corrosive effects of television coverage—that most people linked the gun with the strikers (actually it had belonged to a working miner). This

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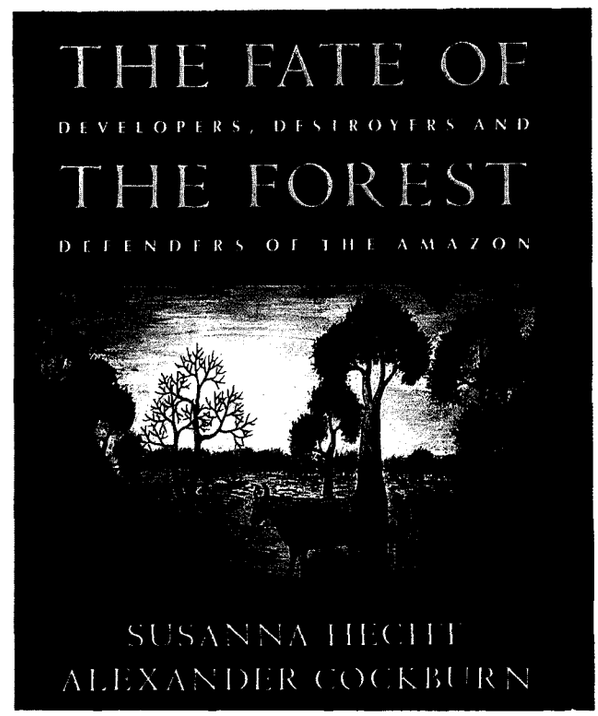

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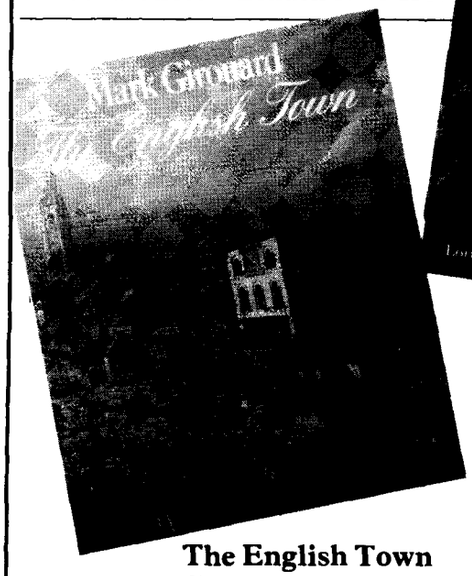

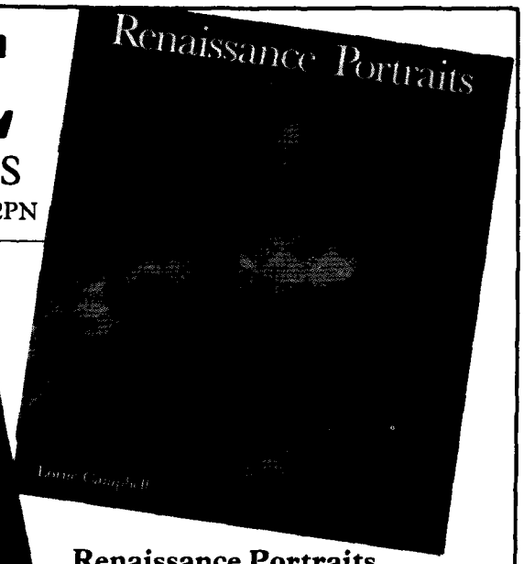

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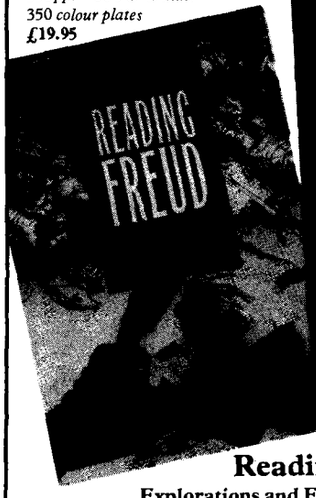

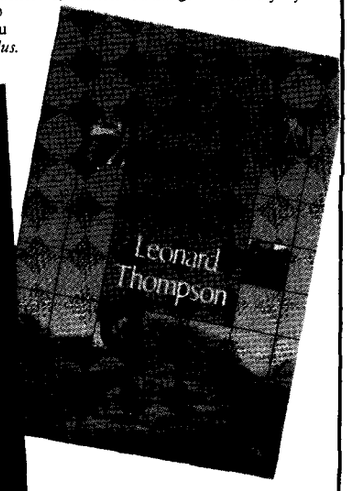

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Gregory Woods
"... wonderfully steamy as well as scholarly ... This book, often perceptive and illuminating, does fill a vital gap in the libraries of literary interpretation" — *The Guardian*
278 *pp.* *New in paper,* **£7.95**

seemed to show that television had made the public see the striking miners as the potentially homicidal baddies, though some (perhaps the television-resisters) thought that the police might have planted it.

Big deal. The book doesn't quite come to terms with the possibility that—though the miners may have much right on their side—there were actually people who disagreed with them sincerely without being brainwashed by television, and who perceived that people on both sides, strikers as well as police, got quite rough at times.

Still, there are some valuable insights. The notion that people don't notice the news is wrong: working class viewers were as good as middle class ones at reconstructing stories about the strike long afterwards on the basis of a few prompts. Seeing may not be believing: but to a surprising and politically imporant degree it does seem to mean remembering.

Barchester man

ANTHONY TROLLOPE: A VICTORIAN IN HIS WORLD
Richard Mullen
Duckworth £25

Nicholas Richardson

No one meeting the middle-aged Anthony Trollope could have thought him anything but an eminent Victorian. He was tall, thick-set (he rode heavy at something over 16 stone), thick-skinned but quick-tempered and, above all, boisterous. Yet despite the fact that Trollope trailed the clouds of a baronetcy from afar (and used the crest on his writing-paper) and had been educated at Harrow—twice—and Winchester, the immediate reaction was that he was not quite a gentleman.

As every reader of the *Autobiography* will remember, Trollope's childhood and adolescence had been miserable. Perhaps not as miserable as that book implies. The *Autobiography*, as Richard Mullen points out, was less a factual record than a moral fable, a hymn to the virtues of hard work and to Victorian values. (Nor would an unhappy childhood have marked Trollope off from more famous contemporaries like Dickens, Tennyson and Thackeray.)

Of course, Trollope's bark was worse than his bite. Indeed they hardly belonged to the same animal. He was a genuinely kind and generous man. He was also an oddly humble one. He carried the humility over into the novels, in which the characters seem almost to write their own parts—and then run off the page. No wonder Tolstoy admired him.

Mullen's book makes explicit what I have long suspected. On the one hand there are the Trollope critics: on the other the Trollopeans. The former will prefer the Palliser novels, the latter the Barchester. Mullen is firmly in the second camp, along with most of Trollope's contemporaries. Indeed, Mullen sometimes

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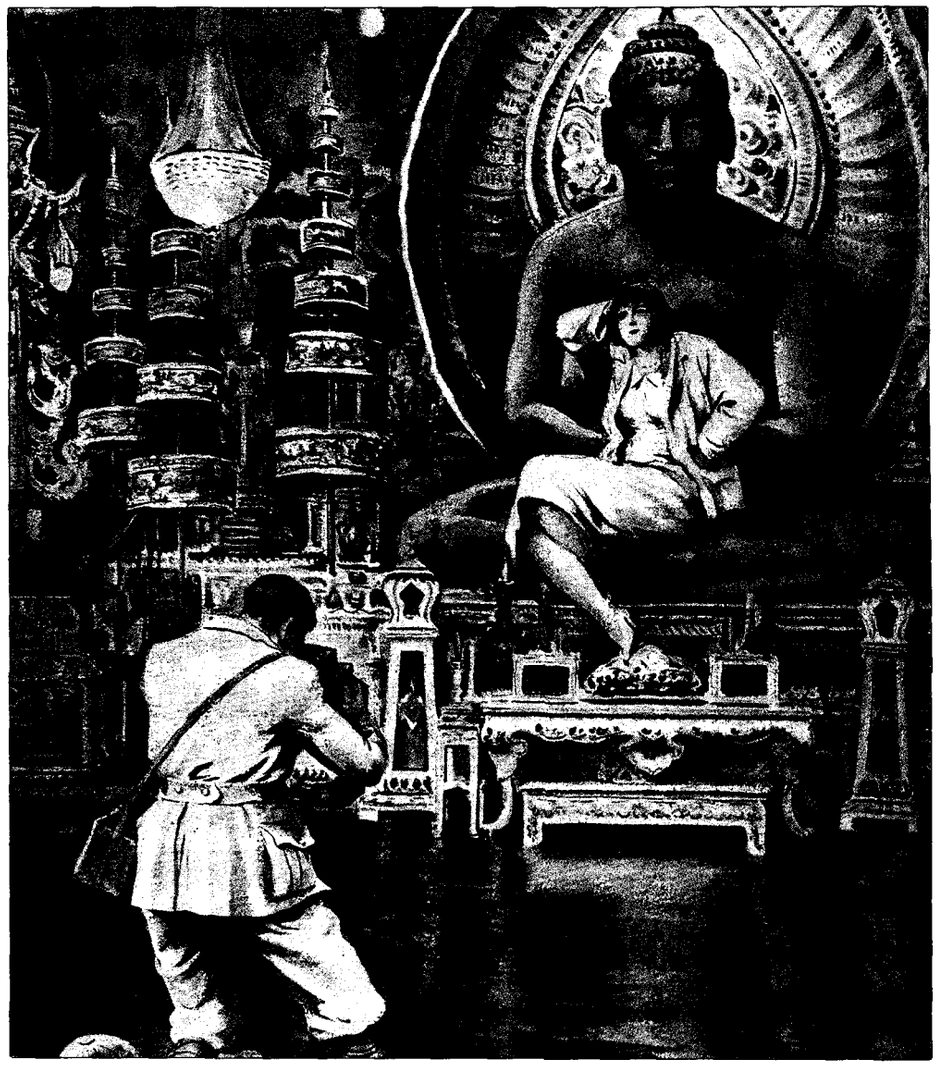
gives the impression that he *is* one of those contemporaries. His biography is very much a Victorian "life and times", with its length (it runs to over 650 pages), leisurely pace and abundance of sometimes useful information. So we learn that Middlesex was famous for the quality of its hay in the early 19th century, that hunting was possible in Regent's Park as late as 1828 and that it was Victorian coal merchants who invented junk-mail, that there was a craze for Apollinaris water in the mid-1870s and that there is a town called Lily Dale in upstate New York. We do not learn much about the novels.

As a Barchester man himself, Mullen is concerned to rescue Trollope from the accusation that he knew little of the church (his clerics being no more than civil servants in drag) and cared al. .ost less. He makes a good case. But even on his own evidence, let alone that of the novels, while Trollope's religious belief may have been genuine and unforced, its expression was merely conventional. Of course he disliked Evangelicals, but that was because he disliked enthusiasm and suspected ungentlemanliness.

Trollope's religion is one theme in the book. Another is Trollope the public figure. He made a more than respectable career in the Post Office, after a scapegrace start. He stood, unsuccessfully, for parliament. He was briefly editor of a political and literary journal. He wrote a good deal of non-fiction, mainly travel books with an educational, not to say hortatory purpose. But to claim, as Mullen does, that his non-fiction is the key to his novels seems as extravagant as the boast that Rose Trollope, the novelist's wife, was a major influence on them. Mullen quotes one of Trollope's admirers with approval: "His wife was his books." The opposite would be nearer the truth.



Mary Evans Picture Library

"Brimming with arrogant confidence": an Englishwoman poses for her photograph on Buddha's lap in a Sri Lankan temple in the 1930s

Have guilt, will travel

WAYWARD WOMEN: A GUIDE TO WOMEN TRAVELLERS
Jane Robinson
Oxford University Press £17.50
WOMEN TRAVEL: ADVENTURES, ADVICE AND EXPERIENCE
Miranda Davies and Natania Jansz (editors)
Harrap £6.95

Dea Birkett

One steamy tropical afternoon, a shared taxi crashed in the bush on a journey from southern Nigeria to the Muslim north. A nearby village hurried out to enjoy the spectacle of a white woman passenger squatting in the dust. I felt utterly alone. No other woman, I grandly imagined, could have faced such searching stares and self-doubt.

I was wrong. Women have always travelled, always encountered and conquered misadventures, and always been torn between their lust for, and fear of, the far horizon. Jane Robinson's *Wayward Women*, compiled as a biographical dictionary of women travellers, names 400 such adventurers over the last 16 centuries. *Women Travel* is a forum for their modern-day counterparts, with over 100 contributions from contemporary women travellers.

Robinson's task is to prove that women have been on the move for centuries. Davies and Jansz's aim is to encourage them to continue to be so. But a comparison of the two books suggests that it is far, far more demanding for a woman to wander now than ever before.

In the early 19th century, when Fanny Parkes set out on her Arab steed for the Indian plains, she cried: "How I love this life in the wilderness!" Almost 200 years later, this reckless abandon has been tempered. As Davies and Jansz confess, "damaging stereotypes of western women have developed—as free-spending, immodest and more available for sex". Sarah Wetherall was confronted by pictures of Samantha Fox in Pakistan which "made up a formidable myth of the western woman as a whore. A myth that cannot easily be dispelled by a single woman traveller wearing a headscarf".

Tales of sexual harassment thread through *Women Travel*. In Mexico, Valerie Walkerdine found "white women, especially with fair hair, are about the most hated, envied and desired of all". Yet as Robinson points out, on an East African journey in 1891 May French Sheldon donned a long blonde wig for protection. Who would dare touch "the White Queen", the explorer asked challengingly.

Robinson's women brim with arrogant confidence which withered with the end of the empire. No mere Indian male dared mess with the big-game hunter Isabel Savory, who at the turn of the century set out for the Himalayas to fox-hunt, pig-stick and tiger-shoot. These earlier women travellers were protected by their colonial status, their large entourage, their guns and their wealth.

Their modern-day counterparts in *Women Travel* are rightly reluctant to wield any remnant of western privilege. Naomi Roberts in Ghana was disturbed by offers to wash her clothes and carry her water: "I didn't want the people to think I thought of them as servants, and I really wanted to learn how to do things for myself." Jessie Carline found herself staring at a box of tampons in a Malawian store. They were

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imported from South Africa with precious hard currency which should have been spent on school books. Should she buy them?

Feminist sensibilities have introduced a new item into the cultural baggage we all take on our journeys: guilt. Over and over again the contributors to *Women Travel* are distressed by the gulf between themselves and women of the developing world. Davies and Jansz write, "Many of the travellers who wrote to us expressed an uneasy guilt about identifying more closely with men, whose greater access to education and contact with the outside world provided a more immediate common ground."

Women Travel offers guidance on ways of crossing this chasm, listing local women's organisations and gay groups. Their advice is to make contact, adapt and show respect. The practical advice absent from other less concerned guides includes imaginative book lists and the availability of contraceptives in each country. It is illegal for a woman to expose her knees in Malawi and her hair in Iran, they warn. On the Pacific Islands, thighs and ankles are considered far more erotic than breasts.

This is valuable information for a woman who wants to journey beyond her culture. But in this anxiety over acceptability some of the unfettered joy of travel is undoubtedly lost. Robinson's women's "up-to-anything free-legged air" has been replaced by a 20th century knowledge of, and concern for, the deprivations of the developing world. This, as much as the harassment, prevents the full-blooded abandon of the exotic journey. In Nepal, Deborah Rutter's elation at being invited to share a meal was soon checked by her shame: "With what trust they took me into their kitchen to feed me. They would wave aside any thanks and say, 'If we came as strangers to your country, you would feed us, wouldn't you?'"

Body and soul

JUAN GOYTISOLO: THE CASE FOR CHAOS
Abigail Lee Six
Yale University Press £20
JUAN THE LANDLESS
Juan Goytisolo (translated by Helen R. Lane)
Serpents Tail £8.99

Paul Binding

Hatred has been the engine of Juan Goytisolo's creative impulse, a hatred not just of Spain as he experienced it, growing to maturity under Franco, but of Spain as her rulers would have her and as they claimed she had been: a great empire, founded in the fact of exploitation and genocide; a religious society, whose church was in truth an arm of the totalitarian state, ready to strike any deviants from its demands.

Goytisolo's hatred—as Abigail Lee Six points out in her thorough and closely reasoned study—extends beyond the specifically Spanish to those forces of which his hate-objects are manifestations. Thus European nationalism itself, inextricable from imperialism, is an anathema, not just its Spanish form, and *Juan the Landless* contains savage denunciations of contemporary France, Goytisolo's country of adoption. Further, Goytisolo would appear to think that Christianity inherently contains those cruelties that in an extreme form—as perpetrated by the conquistadors on Indians or slaves, for example—its more enlightened devotees would now repudiate.

Particularly odious to Goytisolo is Catholicism's rigid dichotomising of soul and body, so that the body—at any rate in its most instinctive reactions and functions—is an area of darkness for many of us. Abigail Lee Six rightly points out how opposites haunt and indeed determine Goytisolo's fictions, and that few are more important, particularly in regard to *Juan the Landless (Juan sin tierra)* than that of *cara-culo* (face-arse).

This receives brilliant treatment in the opening section of the novel, which takes us to a plantation in Spanish-owned Cuba. The Spanish owners' claim to virtue and superiority is made all-but-synonymous with their use of an English flush-lavatory, which of course disguises the effluence to its passers. The Negroes of Cuba—with their much more inclusive and fear-free sexual behaviour—are to the Spanish a people of the arse, to be equated with shit, and yet as necessary to them, in their money-making cultivation, as the process of excretion.

The face-arse antithesis has particular importance for Goytisolo as a homosexual. In a sense his homosexuality has an ideological, if not political determination (Goytisolo himself is also married), for the cruelties of capitalist society are for him inextricable from the cult of the Reproductive Couple who appear in *Juan* baited by Goytisolo's charged, seemingly unending sentences of fury. The Reproductive Couple of today, sanctified by the church with its original Holy Couple, would be likely, according to him, not to produce a Christ, a future strong and suffering man, but a doll, a Shirley Temple, symbol of all that is soft and decadent in a society that at the same time is all-too-strong and ruthless in its self-assertion.

Juan the Landless, the last of the trilogy that includes *Marks of Identity* and *Count Julian*, constitutes a turning-point in Goytisolo as hate-purveyor, however, for it offsets his anathema with a discovered love, that of Arab (Moorish/Islamic) culture. Perhaps his feeling for it derives from its nomadic elements (and maybe essence) for in *Count Julian* the narrator declares: "one's true homeland is not the country of one's birth: man is not a tree: help me to live without roots: ever on the move." And in *Juan the Landless* we have the Arabs apostrophised thus:

"... and the love that you will find in their company will be as burning and as sterile as the desert plains... everything is clean here: supple, muscular bodies, whose sinuous articulations are mindful of the smooth convexity of the distant sand dunes: when the haze blew their rounded forms and the searing breath of the simoon finishes its work of shading."

Hard and clear and uncompromising and honest, not sullied by the domestic and the accumulative—that is how Goytisolo sees the Arab approach to life, and his praise is as lyrically inventive as his invective, paradoxically, is.

Goytisolo's hatred of cultural convention has made him do violence to language, so that his Spanish is smashed up imaginatively and logically disordered. His novel is without characters, or settings in any traditional sense, or action or even all-controlling symbols. In one way *Juan the Landless* is closer to a surrealist poem such as Lorca's *Poet in New York* than to a novel as customarily conceived. There is an entertaining sequence where *bien-pensant* voices upbraid Goytisolo for his literary heterodoxy. They are, on this showing, shallow and enslaved in their views, which in my opinion, is not at all the same thing as saying that objections to so free and yet so arrogant a style are without grounds.

Abigail Lee Six's intelligent study, which explains as well as interprets, will be needed by many coming to grips with this difficult (in both senses) writer.

Paperbacks 1

Thoroughly modern fiction

Lucasta Miller

Why is it that people get so worked up about the beginning of each new decade? The year 1990 doesn't feel very different from 1989, but decades are supposed to slice up our experience into self-contained chunks to be swallowed whole. Virago, like everyone else, has exploited the turn of the decade: "New writing for the nineties" is presumably a catchphrase designed to present their new contemporary list as Thoroughly Modern Fiction. Trying to tease out that nineties feeling from the first ten titles (£4.99 each) is a puzzling business, however, since they're all so diverse.

Of the ten books, three are volumes of short stories, of which Bharati Mukherjee's *The Middleman and other stories* is the most impressive. All her stories are about middle men and women caught in the crux between cultures. America, refracted through the multi-angled eyes of exiles and immigrants, whose responses are individualised with astonishing precision and real empathy, is her leitmotif. It develops through a fascinating range of variations in key and tempo—pathos, violence, irony, obscenity, diffidence, comical hope, tragic despair. The style, somehow both relaxed and taut, never falters. It's a stunning collection.

Carmel Bird's *Woodpecker Point and other stories* isn't quite so accomplished: it wears its artistry on its sleeve. The title story is a bit aimless, perhaps because it's too long. The best stories are brief, laconic and beautifully crafted, with the author playing the stylistic ingenue while

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NEWSTATESMAN
SOCIETY

Summer tales

Over the summer the *New Statesman and Society* will be publishing a season of short stories by leading writers. The season begins next week with "The Age of Lead", a haunting new story by the Canadian novelist and poet, Margaret Atwood. Among Margaret Atwood's novels are *The Edible Woman*, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Cat's Eye*. She has also published seven volumes of poetry.

Sue Townsend, James Kelman and Janice Galloway are also contributing stories—and we have a few surprises up our sleeves! Sue Townsend, creator of Adrian Mole, has written a subtle love story, "The Flowers", which will be next in the season.

Then come the two Glasgow writers. James Kelman's *A Disaffection*, shortlisted for last year's Booker Prize, established his reputation as one of Britain's hugest writing talents; Alison Fell in the *NSS* wrote that he was "angrier and funnier than Beckett". Janice Galloway is an exciting new writer; her first book, *The Trick is to Keep Breathing*, was published earlier this year. Her story, "Blood", has a remarkable physical presence; it delineates the endemic misogyny of language and power and the crushing of a young girl's sensuality.

Place a regular order for the *NSS* with your newsagent. Or subscribe now (see page 39).

You couldn't be in better company this summer.

What makes religious leadership today?

Entries are now invited for the fourth award to commemorate the late Charles Douglas-Home, former editor of The Times.

The subject is to be the influence of religious leaders — either mainstream or minority — in contemporary Britain.

Entrants are asked to submit a project for original research into the nature and exercise of such leadership, locally or nationally.

The winner will receive a grant of up to £15,000 from the Charles Douglas-Home Memorial Trust. The completed work must be written in a form suitable for a book and for possible serialisation in The Times.

Application forms can be obtained from Anne Martin, 57 Thorpebank Road, London, W12 0PG, and entries close on 7 September 1990. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Further details of this year's award were published in The Times on 2 July.

THE TIMES

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secretly dabbling in the disturbing. You can detect just a hint of Katherine Mansfield.

Homeland and other stories, by Barbara Kingsolver, has more of a unifying theme. Over the other side of the Atlantic, her tales of sometimes twisted family ties emerge—mainly through the eyes of women—within a variety of geographical and psychological spaces. But she doesn't achieve Mukherjee's range. And her over-use of the present tense is irritating.

Of the novels, Lauretta Ngcobo's *And They Didn't Die* is the one I had most difficulty putting down. It tells the story of Jezile, whose rural South African community is struggling under the imposition of apartheid. Her will to survive is stretched—by enforced separations from her husband, by political imprisonment, by physical hardship. Raped by her white employer, she gives birth to a son and is ostracised by her own rigidly traditional community. But, depressing as it sounds, this book has a real vitality. Jezile's warmth and energy won't allow suffering to dehumanise her. It's a bit like Tess without Hardy's sadistic streak. There's nothing fancy in Lauretta Ngcobo's style—she plots a straightforward narrative. But that's the strength of it.

Charades, by Janette Turner Hospital, is far more artful. Rich in metaphor, a strange mixture of surface and depth, high definition and shimmering opacity, it takes its cue from the "hologram girl", its heroine Charade. An Antipodean exotic on an American university campus, Charade finds her way into the physics professor's bed, aestheticising the jargon of science en route. Night after night she weaves Prof Koenig through the story of her life as he listens, spellbound. It's a bit intellectually self-conscious in places, but its author is capable of fine, original writing.

Jennifer Dawson's *Judasland* is another university novel, but of a very different kind: it doesn't take its art so seriously. Clare, the secretarial "college treasure" of Sanctus Spiritus, Oxford, with her nice cotton frocks and nice bright smile, stifles her own desires and allows herself to be talked at and exploited by a load of loathsome dons. But as her friendship with Hari, an Indian doctor, grows, she begins to revolt against this comfortably selfless (in both senses) image. Dawson's satire can be deliciously nasty when it comes to Oxbridge snobbism. Snippets of donnish conversation float around, at once plausible and absurd.

Her talent for containing the grotesque and surreal within a reassuringly realist setting is even more apparent in *The Upstairs People*. In this novel, Cossey captivates her children with a never-ending flow of improvised memoirs that delight and at the same time incarcerate them. Her recollections of a perverse Evangelical upbringing before world war one give Dawson the opportunity to refine the crowded images of memory into an elegant pattern punctuated by the bizarre and the repulsive. But Cossey's conspiratorial attitude towards her children reveals its sinister underside. And *The Upstairs People* becomes an intensely serious psychological novel, both compelling and disturbing.

Memory is also the key to June Oldham's *A Little Rattle in the Air*, but there's really no comparison between Dawson's inventive writing and this rather predictable novel. When Nora involves herself in a community drama project that is supposed to give the inhabitants of Neatham the chance to express their recollections and create local history, she finds that memory can be a disturbing thing, and that the local people seem (unsurprisingly) reluctant to offer their memories uncensored. But not enough is done to excite the reader's curiosity, even if Nora sustains her inquisitiveness.

I have left Helen Hodgman's *Broken Words* till last, because she seems to be an acquired taste that I haven't managed to acquire. People apparently find a razor-sharp humour in her splintery pictures of late 20th century urban females. Admittedly, there's a certain panache to the way she chooses words and links them together. But as a sustained piece of writing, I found it rather disappointing.

Paperbacks 2

From the country to the city

Andy Croft

Give a Martian almost any literary history of the last 100 years and he would have a pretty strange idea of the lives of people on this island, their worries and their aspirations. No one ever worked, and until recently no one ever gave birth. Novels, plays and poems were about what people did when they were not at work, when they were at school, at home, on holiday, or in bed. Nothing was more significant than sex, little worth worrying about except death, and there was no subject more interesting than the act of writing itself.

Fortunately British writing has always been more serious, more enjoyable, more *readable* than the canon would have us believe. Literary value is defined not so much by what gets on to the reading lists, as by what gets left out. Merlin Press's Radical Fiction series, edited by John Lucas (familiar in these columns for his poetry reviews), gets under way by making four ordinary, extraordinary novels available again, each of which was a critical and commercial success in its day. This is an implicit challenge to the unspoken values of "Eng Lit". And each novel is served with an excellent introductory essay, clear and empirical, sharp reminders too of the political value of biography, bibliography and historical narrative.

Rex Warner's wondrous first novel, *The Wild Goose Chase* (£6.99 paperback/£14.99 hardback), first published in 1937, summons up a whole tradition of radical, satirical writing from Bunyan, Fielding and Swift to Lewis Carroll in order to construct a breath-taking picture of contemporary Europe. It is a slapstick nightmare of a novel, where nothing is quite as it seems.

Revolutionaries lose their false beards, the jolly laughing policemen are dangerous mental defectives and the clergy are armed with poison gas. It is a slightly anachronistic work, too long in the writing to be consistent with the politics of the Popular Front which Warner had by 1937 embraced. But it is unquestionably one of the great works of the decade, a one-off, unbeatable introduction to the developing thinking of the *New Country* grouping round Day Lewis and Auden. And it makes a nonsense of all those lazy cold war histories of the 1930s, where British writers assiduously copy Soviet models of socialist realism. *The Wild Goose Chase* is now part of that radical tradition of "English" writing which it draws on, neither an ideological aberration in the life of the English novel, nor a candidate for an alternative little list of "Socialist Classics".

Walter Brierley—a Derbyshire miner best known as the author of *Means-Test Man*—has suffered in recent years from various unsuccessful attempts to squeeze him on to such a list as something called a "Proletarian Writer". The re-publication of *Sandwichman* (£6.99/£12.99) should put a stop to this. It is an unambitious, autobiographical novel about working class educational aspirations and disappointments, unspectacular and serious, typical of working class writing between the wars, patiently documenting the details of a working life. If it is written in the shadow of D.H. Lawrence, what writer from the coalfields has not come under that shadow? And though the protagonist, Arthur Gardner, is too preoccupied with his books to notice ideological ironies, *Sandwichman* makes great play of an education system which requires the young miner to study Latin verbs during his snap-time.

At the end of the novel Arthur's mother dies and he leaves the pit village, unemployed, on the tramp towards Derby and the "workhouse". The main male character of Margaret Harkness's *Out of Work* (£4.99/£12.99), first published under the pseudonym John Law in 1889, also leaves his village after the death of his mother and the loss of his job, to look for work in London. There Jos Coney finds unemployment, poverty, socialist politics and Christian hypocrisy. In the Trafalgar Square riots of 1887 he is injured and gaoled, goes to the workhouse and finally dies of hunger.

At the start of Ella Hepworth Dixon's bitter *The Story of a Modern Woman* (£4.99/£12.99, first published in 1900), young Mary Erle stands in Highgate cemetery, where she has just buried her father, and defiantly looks out over London. "We're not going to be afraid of it," she declares, "just because it's big, and brutal, and strong." She survives London—just—working as a journalist, and discovers a knack for writing romantic fairy tales at the end. *The Wild Goose Chase* begins as a fairy tale, with three brothers leaving their home in the countryside to reach the City—where they discover fascism.

From the country to the city, from childhood to a sudden adult world of hard work and difficult choices, personal disappointments and wider defeats—these four novels are conventional enough *Bildungsromans*, standing clearly in the mainstream of British novel writing. But they are also shot through with the growing pains of class and gender, with a knowledge of poverty, work, unemployment and educational waste, cant and lies. These books made a lot of people's heads turn when they were first published. Reprinted, they make a lot of the "classics" of the last 100 years look pretty bloody silly.

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'John Keegan's history of World War II stands above the competition'
Preview

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

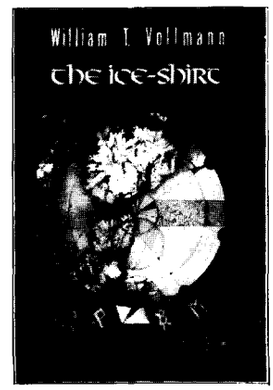
JOHN KEEGAN

Published on 5th July in

Arrow Paperback

£9.99

ANDRE DEUTSCH



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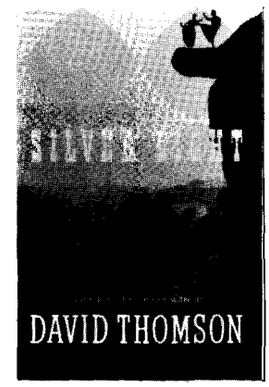

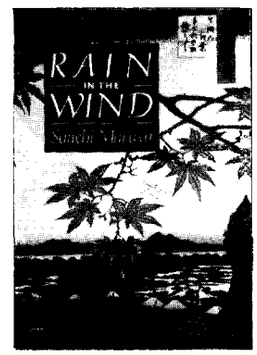

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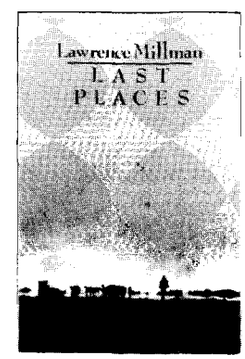

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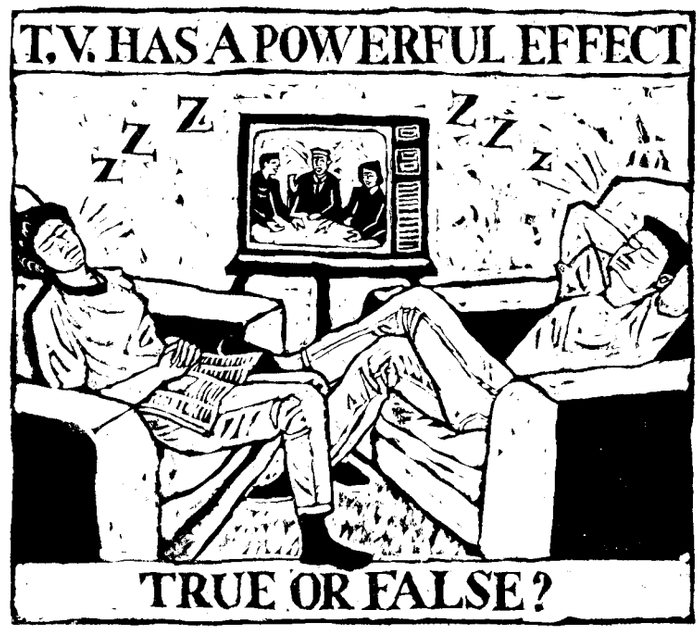
Society Today is *NSS*'s term-time page for sociology students

Screen tests

Do the media determine our beliefs? Pat McNeill contrasts old theories with some new evidence



Judy Stevens

The problem of establishing cause-and-effect relationships is central to all science, including much social science, and has been a particularly important theme in the sociology of the media. Put simply, the concept of cause is that one state of affairs brings about another. A cause must occur prior to (or possibly simultaneously with) its effect, and the two states must regularly succeed one another. Natural scientists are concerned to establish a knowledge of causes, because this makes it possible to work on producing a desired effect (such as a bridge that does not fall down), preventing an undesirable effect (such as through vaccination against disease), or predicting the future (as in weather forecasting).

Establishing causal relationships in sociology is more difficult. This is partly because it is not possible to set up properly controlled experiments and partly because human behaviour is different from that in the natural world. Social phenomena have meaning for those involved. These meanings are associated with human choices and intentions, which are part of the cause of social action.

In the case of the mass media, and especially television, the common-sense assumption is that a medium so vivid and so heavily used in the home must have a powerful effect on its viewers. Common-sense assumptions are not, however, acceptable to social scientists, who require valid and reliable evidence.

The earliest media research, from the beginning of the century until the second world war, borrowed its cause/effect model from behaviourist psychology and assumed that human behaviour could be explained largely in terms of stimulus and response. It was based on what has been called the "hypodermic" or "mass- manipulative" model and argued that the media, which did not at that time include television, had a powerful influence on audiences perceived as made up of a passive and undifferentiated mass of isolated individuals.

The next phase of research, from the late 1940s to the 1960s, argued that audiences were more active and discriminating in their use of the media than the early researchers had recognised. The classic quotation from this position is from Halloran in 1964: "We must get away from the habit of thinking in terms of what television does to people and substitute for it the idea of what people do with television." Audiences, it was argued, actively select what they watch or read and respond to media messages in terms of their pre-existing attitudes. Many studies of media effects were carried out but the conclusions reached were partial and inconsistent.

This positivistic search for cause/effect relationships in the media was replaced in the 1970s by an emphasis on the study of media content, with particular reference to television news. The interest in effects was not entirely lost, but it was recognised that the processes were much more complex and long-term than could be identified through experimental research or questionnaire-based surveys, the favoured techniques until then. This new approach has been called the "cultural effects" model and, in its Marxist versions, the "hegemonic" model.

Some of the best-known British work of this kind has been carried out by the Glasgow University Media Group (GUMG) whose studies of TV news employ both content analysis and semiology. Semiology involves the decoding of the hidden meaning of news items (or any other form of communication) by analysis of how they are presented, the language used, the camera angles, and any other signs or symbols employed in the story. The GUMG concluded, in a series of studies, that the hidden messages of TV news systematically favour the dominant ideology of a capitalist society, legitimating the status quo and thus protecting the interests of the powerful.

However, even those who accepted GUMG's account of the bias in the news agreed that they had not shown its effect on audiences, especially in the long term. A new book (Philo 1990; reviewed this week on p38) takes this aspect of the enquiry a stage further. Philo starts by explicitly acknowledging the problem: "It has always been difficult to show how media content relates to public belief." A member of the GUMG, he then presents a report of research carried out into the longer-term influence of reporting of the miners' strike in 1984/5.

The research began a year after the strike had ended. The design involved working with groups, each made up of people with similar social backgrounds or interests and drawn from different regions of the UK. They varied too in how direct had been their experience of the strike and particularly of the picketing. Each group was supplied with 12 pictures taken from stills and was invited to write an imaginary news story.

Members of the group also wrote individual answers to some questions about the strike. There were also interviews designed to clarify the written answers, sometimes followed by further discussion in the group.

The research demonstrated that people retained very clear beliefs about the strike and the picketing and that these beliefs were substantially derived from television reporting of the events, often using virtually the same words as news-readers had used over a year before. However, while there was broad agreement about what had been shown on television, the groups, and some individuals within them, varied in the extent to which they accepted those accounts. For example, people who had first-hand experience of picketing, including police officers, knew that it was largely a peaceful and even boring activity rather than the violent confrontation presented on the news.

The project shows that while individuals are not passive receivers, there is a "powerful impact of the media, both in limiting what audiences can see and in providing key elements of political consciousness and belief". This cause/effect relationship is not just short-term.

Discussion:

What are your memories of the miners' strike? What are they based on?

Philo, G. (1990) Seeing is Believing, Routledge

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Twin tracks

Labour should challenge the archaic system that divides young people into thinkers and toilers

Christopher Price

Nearly half a century ago Ernest Bevin diagnosed the educational challenge facing Britain as "poverty of aspiration". In the 1990s the problem is still with us. As most other western countries plan to entice up to three quarters of each cohort of youngsters into higher education by the next century, we still operate a schooling system based on disincentives and failure.

As youngsters reach the age of 16, they face the biggest disincentive of all—demotion to a low grade "training" system and exclusion from education. In Labour's new policy document, *Looking to the Future*, that divided system is perpetuated.

The passage on training goes like this:

> Every 16 year old must have the right to go on learning and the right to get a qualification. As we explain later we will raise standards in schools and reform the A level system in England and Wales to overcome the problem of too early specialisation.
>
> We will also replace YTS with a new training guarantee—a traineeship lasting for up to four years and leading to qualifications recognised throughout Britain and the rest of Europe. The system will be flexible enough to meet people's different needs.

18 pages later, the education passage says:

> Our aim is to double the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds in education and training. Labour will introduce 5-subject A levels along the lines of the Higginson Committee and supported by teachers and higher education. It will give students greater choice as well as the chance to combine qualifications which will be recognised throughout Europe.

These passages beg too many questions. Who decides which system youngsters end up in? On what criteria? What is the point of perpetuating apartheid between "students" and "trainees"? Everywhere else, the policy emphasises unifying divided systems. Why two systems from 16 to 19?

Fortunately, *Looking to the Future* is not the last word on the subject. The first education and training paper from Labour's new "think tank", the Institute for Public Policy Research, outlines a framework which no longer closes off options for youngsters between 16 and 19 (*A British Baccalauréat*; IPPR, 18 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB). It analyses Britain's uniquely divided system and comes down in favour of radical replacement of the existing mechanisms through which young people in this age group are filtered into the world of higher education and work.

Their most radical proposal is the creation of a British "Baccalauréat", with A level equivalence built into it at the highest level. This British "Bac" would be modular, achievable at the student's own pace by full- or part-time study and flexible enough for the modules to be taken at school, college, workplace or by distance learning. It would build on the curricular innovation already injected into the schools over the past decade by the GCSE at 16 and the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI).

Examinations for 16 year olds are changing throughout Europe and expansion of higher education will accelerate change. There is now a movement against crude national testing and in favour of trusting colleges with "good housekeeping" seals of approval to do the job. Employers are bewildered by the new Training and Enterprise Councils which their members dominate, and which are meant to coordinate training locally. Most want a simple system which tells them about students' skills as well as knowledge. Leading edge companies like IBM and BP have been backing for some years an "Education for Capability" movement, devoted to reforming the curriculum on these lines.

> *It is recognised that force-fed educational elites do not deliver the skills we need*

In any event, with a labour shortage looming, all employers are looking for more broadly based and capable students. It is now recognised that force-fed educational elites do not deliver the skills countries need. The IPPR paper is highly realistic about these needs. It analyses the "skills gap" that is currently driving Britain into a low wage, low technology spiral, and sees the need at least to double the participation rate in higher education.

It also calls into question some sacred cows. It emphasises the psychological incentives of a reformed assessment system over the economic ones of "maintenance allowances". For this and other reasons, the plan will meet strenuous resistance. The authors recognise how the independent schools (and some of the professions could sabotage the plan by re-inventing a private elite A level for universities.

Opposition will also come from vested interests on the left, including elements of the teacher unions committed to sixth forms. Our split examination system has a long pedigree and it will not be easy to unify it. The original matriculation exam, which led to the School Certificate and the GCE, was always middle class property, first of the public schools and then the universities. It was initiated by the Headmasters' Conference in the late 19th century to entrench the public school link with Oxbridge. In response to this elite system, the City and Guilds of London and other institutions spawned a range of vocational certificates.

This divided system has always suited the Labour Party and the unions. From the turn of the century, the early *educational* rhetoric of the party and the trade unions was consistently meritocratic. It demanded limited chances for the "bright" working class to join the elite—and put far less emphasis on widening that elite. The unions were committed to the apprentice training system—the lifeblood of the movement's future. The assumption of a divided educational system soon became as entrenched as that of a divided class system.

These divisions are now firmly locked into the machinery of government and parliament. A Department of Employment has existed for much of the century alongside a Department of Education. Because shadow portfolios are dictated by actual ministerial ones, in the normal course of events, Jack Straw would shadow education and Tony Blair employment until the general election. Yet the IPPR study presupposes a unified Department of Education and Training. No progress can be made until this antique division in government is removed.

Neil Kinnock has so far devoted little energy to proposals for reforming the machinery of government. A brave decision would be to appoint a single spokesperson for Education and Training after the next shadow cabinet elections. It requires such a symbolic act to demonstrate that Labour is serious about meeting young people's aspirations and bridging the 1990s skills gap.

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TEMPUS FUGIT. And tomorrow never comes. So professional man, healthy, heterosexual, numberous interests, no serious deficiencies but platonically tied, seeks mutual support and affection with (at least some) humour, in extra-marital relationship. Central England. Please reply to Box (27) 337.

THIS LONDON-BASED SOCIALIST widower (63) semi-retired but actively involved refuses to believe his 36-year marriage has to be his last long-term happy relationship. If you are a woman looking for the same please write now to Box (27) 338.

CALIFORNIAN WOMAN, staying in Chelsea, seeks interesting, well travelled gentleman in 60's for sharing the best of both cultures. Please reply to Box (27) 339.

WARM, HUMOROUS, REFLECTIVE, male professional, 39, Irish, vegetarian, smoker, interested psychotherapy, conversation, the arts - just being. Seeks woman of similar age and interests, preferably London based. Letter plus photo reciprocated. Please write Box (27) 340.

WANTED: SOCIALIST MALE (40's/50's) non-chauvinist, non-smoker who likes music (rock/classical/jazz) travel, reading novels, walking in the countryside, films, fringe-theatre, fun and rounded, intelligent woman. This paragon is sought by socialist woman (48), divorced, independent, hoping for close but not cloying relationship long term. Might settle for compromise! Please write to Box (27) 341.

ECLECTIC ATTRACTIVE, BLACK WOMAN, young 39, works in education, London based. Enjoys travel, food and discourse, seeks tallish male, 35+, view to sharing each others company or more. Please reply to Box (27) 342.

ATTRACTIVE LONDON WOMAN, independent, intelligent, fiftyish; interested in arts, politics, travel, fun; seeks loving man, any race, for stable relationship. Please reply Box (24) 308.

ADVENTUROUS ACADEMIC MAN fond of children, cats, travelling, sailing and skiing but anti-smoking, seeks intelligent adventurous attractive woman to share life as equals with view to starting a late family. Resident N.W. Start adventure by writing to Box (23) 286.

FEMININE, QUIET, WELLSPOKEN, artistic, blonde, Aquarian woman, 54, London but moving, seeks loving man to cook and care for again. Please write to Box (25) 314.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL MAN (61), London based, interested in the Arts, seeks non-smoking, warm-hearted, sensual woman, any circumstance or nationality, for friendship and enjoyment of life-enhancing pleasures. Please write to Box (23) 287.

ROMANTIC LEO LADY (24 years). Feminine, petite; Blues, cat, countryside and poetry lover. Seeks soulmate (Aquarian? Scorpio?) in London area. Please reply to Box (22) 282.

WARM, HUMOROUS, REFLECTIVE, male professional, 40, celt, interested psychoanalysis, the arts etc. seeks similar woman for companionship possibly more. London. Box (22) 283.

WANTED — PROFESSIONAL MAN in his mid to late forties who may be keen to combine forces with an intelligent, attractive and slim lady who would like to start a new life around the Cotswolds. Interests include homes and gardens, pets, reading, writing and the pursuit of happiness for self and a nice caring other. Please reply to Box (22) 276.

ENGINEER/SCIENTIST 52, 5'8" short, of decent liberal outlook, divorced, bit overworked, introvert, seeking Europhile brunette, 45+, life sciences/academic, for love, trust and (eventually) conventional responsibility. A self reliant caring father (son 15, Grmr sch. Surrey) interested in classical music, european travel, Sir Joseph Banks and Jim Corbett's country: No arty folks please but Michelle Palin OK. Please write to Box (26) 318.

MAN (61) warm hearted, intelligent, imaginative, attractive - seeks a sensual, slim or medium-build woman, any circumstance, for pleasurable stimulating friendship. Please write to Box (26) 321.

PLAYWRIGHT: talented, late developer (almost posthumous.) Educated cockney. Passions: writing, love/lust, sun, music, teaching adults. Seeks woman with own passions. Box (26) 322.

FOR FRIENDS INTERESTED IN GREEN ISSUES, alternative therapies, human rights, and stress-free lifestyles contact NATURAL FRIENDS (NS), 15, Benyon Gardens, Culford, Suffolk, IP28 6EA (stamp appreciated). 028484-315.

SINGLE 25+? Whether you're looking for romance, or new friends, you will meet more people at London Epicureans' convivial DINNER PARTIES. 081-882 3414, 081-367 1896.

REGRET NOT WASTED YEARS, the light ahead is bright. Engineer/educationist, mature inquiring mind, seeks similar mate; with, without or wanting family. Age immaterial if spirit young. Box (24) 300.

WE NEED MEN, REAL MEN! Single 30+ Call the ladies at The Single Gourmet Dining Club on 071 937 4522.

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VOLUNTEER NOTICE BOARD is a free service provided by New Statesman & Society with financial assistance from Thames Television's Help programme. Interested organisations are invited to send their copy (approximately 45 words) to Dawn King at New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ by Friday preceding publication date. Please note this service is for recruiting volunteers only. If you have salaried vacancies contact the Classified Department on 071-739-1645.

WESTMINSTER Bereavement Service needs sympathetic volunteers to offer counselling support to the bereaved living in Westminster. Autumn training starts in NW8 area on 31/10, 8-10pm and Saturdays: 3/11, 17/11 and 1/12 from 10-4. For further information and an application form phone: 071 289-6597 or write to: Westminster Bereavement Service, 24 Formosa Street, London W9 2QA.

LONDON YOUTH Adventure – a new trust which grant aids London's 13 - 21 year olds require a volunteer to help with admin. tasks. Usually 4 hours p/w but flexibility is essential as LYA is developing all the time. Basic computer skills an advantage, an interest in young people is essential. Details available from Paul Wilson on 071 387 9494.

COMMUNITY FURNITURE Supply Scheme desperately need all clean and useful items of furniture, cookers, fridges, pots and pans, bedding, china etc. Our clients are long term hostel dwellers, discharged hospital patients (psychiatric), Womens Rescue, the handicapped and elderly. For collections and deliveries please tel: 081-429 1019.

BRIXTON LONDON. Kids & Co runs a local childcare advice & information service, workshops and newsletter. We need a few hours help a week doing research, outreach, marketing, publicity, reports, surveys, organising one-off events etc. If you could help please write to KIDS & CO at 60 Beechdale Rd, SW2 or phone 081-674 4278.

FAMILY COURTS SERVICE are looking for volunteers to help run two Saturday Access Centres in South London where divorced or separated parents come to spend time with their children. If you are interested please give us a ring: 081 672 2682/8812.

FULL-TIME VOLUNTEERS are urgently required to work in large city centre hostel for homeless people and their group homes. Volunteers live in outside accommodation but are expected to do some sleep in duties. They receive full board and lodging, pocket money, travel expenses etc. The job is interesting and rewarding. For further information please contact:- Linda Shaw at Oxford Cyrenians, P.O. Box 36, Paradise St., Oxford OX1 1HE or phone Oxford 726241.

VOLUNTEER Press Researcher required for influential charity which is working to rehabilitate young victims of serious physical and sexual abuse. Help us to prepare for a major fundraising drive to increase provision for the thousands in need. Expenses are paid. Contact Louisa Dent 071 251 6072.

IF YOU ARE between 16 - 20 years old with some time on your hands this summer, the Belfast/ Islington teenage scheme would like to hear from you. Offering sun and adventure in London and in Ireland doing community work for 10 days July and 2 weeks August. Call Mo 071-704 9563 or Jackie 071 281 6930.

ARTHRITIS CARE is seeking Arthritis Care Visitors throughout the country tocall on people with arthritis in their own homes. Expenses and a car-depreciation allowance are payable. We also need Officials to service national branch network, contact Regions Department, Arthritis Care, 5 Grosvenor Cres, London SW1X 7ER. Tel: 071 235-0902.

THAMES HELP

Thames Help, presented by Jackie Spreckley, is a four minute local social action programme. It appears four times a week on Thames Televison at 5.55 approximately (check TV Times for details). Here is a summary of this week's programmes.

This week we are looking at some of the influential but unpaid jobs that people can do within their communities.

Monday 16th July 1990—Magistrates

Jeanie Picart's grandmother was a JP in the Caribbean. Jeanie has followed her example and now, after a lengthy application process, she is a Magistrate in the Juvenile Court.

Tuesday 17th July—Local Councillors

In the lates sixties Pat Olley was secretary of a tenants' association and was involved in a battle with her local council. She decided she could have more influence by becoming a councillor and stood successfully as a Labour candidate.

Wednesday 18th July 1990—School Governors

The Government's education reforms have made school governors more powerful and influential, but can they cope with the increased workload? Andrea Encinas-Meade tells us about the demands and rewards of being a parent governor.

Thursday 19th July—Community Health Councillors

Community Health Councils act as a watchdog on local health services and can influence the policies of health authorities. Bridget Clery works for Crossroads Care Attendance Scheme, an organisation which helps carers, but she gives up a few hours of her time each week to represent carers within the Community Health Council and to make sure their voice is heard.

For more information on these and other public service jobs, you can write for our booklet to: Thames Help, PO Box 2LP, London W1A 2LP

THAMES TELEVISION

Thames Help, Thames Television PLC, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9LL. Telephone: 01-387 9494.

VOLUNTEERS ARE WANTED. Action for Victims of Medical Accidents - a small Charity based in Forest Hill, requires volunteers for a variety of clerical and manual tasks. The work is interesting and would provide an ideal opportunity for work experience in a lively and friendly atmosphere. Any travel expenses will be paid and enquiries should be made to: Keith Miles on 081 291 2793.

ST BOTOLPH'S CRYPT Centre for Single People in Housing Need requires volunteers now to help with our evening centre Mon – Thur evenings 6 - 8 pm. Contact Lucy Firth or Daly Maxwell for further details.

BONDWAY NIGHTSHELTER is an emergency provision for homeless men, require volunteers (aged 18 - 30) to work for approx. 6 months. Allowance and accommodation provided. We recruit throughout the year so welcome applications from those wishing to be considered at a later stage. For further details contact: Volunteer Co-ordinator, P O Box 374, London SW8 1SJ. Enclosing a S.A.E.

CHILDREN'S CAMP: We need volunteers aged 18 yrs + to help run a camp for 'highly strung' inner city children aged 13 - 16 years, from 24th to 31st August, 1990. For more details and an application form, write to: Mr R F Mills, Fern Street Settlement, Fern St, London E3 3PS.

A VOLUNTEER IS REQUIRED (Sutton Coldfield, W. Midlands). Fit girl with caring personality to assist spinal cord injured young lady solicitor dependent on a wheelchair. Duties – personal care eg. help washing, dressing, toileting, getting-up/going to bed. Some cooking and general help. Experience not essential. Free accom. and living expenses of £40.50p p/w. Live in own room. Hours to be agreed with other volunteer working on a shift system. Placement 4-6 months + starting September. For further details and a full profile contact 021-354 8646.

CHILDHOPE UK, The International Movement on behalf of streetchildren, need volunteers to assist director in small W.1 office. Admin. work and an opportunity to help us make a real impact here & abroad. Call Nic 071 402 4600.

MAINLINERS, an agency working in the HIV/AIDS and drugs field, is re-launching its very special newsletter in July. If you can help with editing or mailing please contact us on 071 274 4000 ex 443.

GLASGOW SIMON Community offers time, friendship & supportive group living to long- term homeless women and men, especially regular rough sleepers. We need full-time, live-in volunteers who can stay for at least 6 months, preferably a year. Full board, plus a weekly and a holiday allowance. Contact Chris Lytton, 133 Hill Street, Glasgow G3 6UB for details. Tel: 041-332 3448.

INDEPENDENT LIVING Alternatives promotes independence for people disabled in the form of a volunteer partnership. Volunteers provide physical support in return for free board and lodgings + £40 p/w. We urgently need initiative, contact us at: Independent Living Alternatives, Fulton Hse, Fulton Rd, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 OTF. 081 902 8998 ext 270.

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Carole Angier's biography of Jean Rhys will be out this year from Andre Deutsch. **Paul Binding**'s last novel was *Kingfisher Weather*. **Dea Birkett** is author of *Spinsters Abroad; Victorian Lady Explorers* (Basil Blackwell). **Louisa Buck** is co-author of *Relative Values* published by BBC Enterprises, in connection with the BBC series. **Rosalind Coward**'s book *The Whole Truth* has just been published in paperback by Faber. **Marc Cooper**'s article on Guatemala appears in association with New York's *Village Voice*. **Andy Croft**'s study of British novelists and the Popular Front, *Red Letter Days*, is published by Lawrence and Wishart this September. **Martyn Harris** writes the *Daily Telegraph*'s "Odd Man Out" column. **Dave Hill** is the author of a book on John Barnes. **R W Johnson** is a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. **Kevin Loader** is a BBC producer, working on a six-part comedy about a family in therapy. **John Lloyd** is a writer for the *Financial Times*. **Roy Porter**'s latest book, *The Enlightenment*, is published in paperback by Penguin in September. **Christopher Price** is Director of Leeds Polytechnic. **Jean Seaton**'s essay *Politics for a Change* appears in *The Alternative*, edited by Ben Pimlott and Anthony Wright. **Robert Waller** is research director of the Harris Research Centre and author of *The Almanac of British Politics* (Routledge)

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ENDGAMES

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 3133 Set by E O Parrott
Graffiti found in the lavatories of a famous building of your choice.

Report by Ms de Meaner
Not a particularly good crop this week. Worried that bad temper was preventing me from fully appreciating your witticisms, I handed the whole lot over to young Tom Foolery. Back came a note: "Pretty feeble. Maybe graffiti just isn't funny!" Now, I can't believe *that*. In fact, G Goatley, whose memory is better than mine, wrote in to remind us of a winner to this same competition (can't you think of any new ones, Eric?) around 1968; to whit: "Pual Jonhson wares a cumerbund." *[sic]* Even now, I think that's quite funny. I expect I'd have found it hysterical at the time. So, no excuses, I feel, for this abysmal performance. Three pounds for each winning entry. No hon menshes—anything that was halfway good is printed below.

Bill Greenwell has written in to complain of being wrongly and cruelly denied a place with the winners last week. Never forget, Bill, the judge's decision is always final.

The Carlton Club: Kilroy wa
Gerard Benson

House of Commons: Death is nature's way of telling you you're deselected.
M E Ault

Bradford mosque: Salman Rushdie *wasn't* here!
D A Prince

NUM HQ: There's t'Rouble at t'pit
British Museum: The Piltdown Man was framed!
R J Pickles

---

10 Downing Street: Leaks welcomed
David Alexander

The Vatican: Women should have the right to bare arms!
Institute of Chartered Accountants: An accountant is known by the company that keeps him
Ron Rubin

The British Humanist Association loo: Can't pray? Won't pray!
Trappist monastery: [ ]
David Owens's Limehouse home: Two's company, three's a campaign
The Guinness boardroom: There's no taste for accounting
Bill Greenwell

BBC TV Centre: All the egos and more than one basket
J A Gammon

British Museum: The Greeks had a word for it: Theft
Stanley J Sharpless

BBC TV Centre: Kilroy *is* here!
Chas F Garvey

British Rail: Please do not use this room while the train is in the station
Bernard Doswell

---

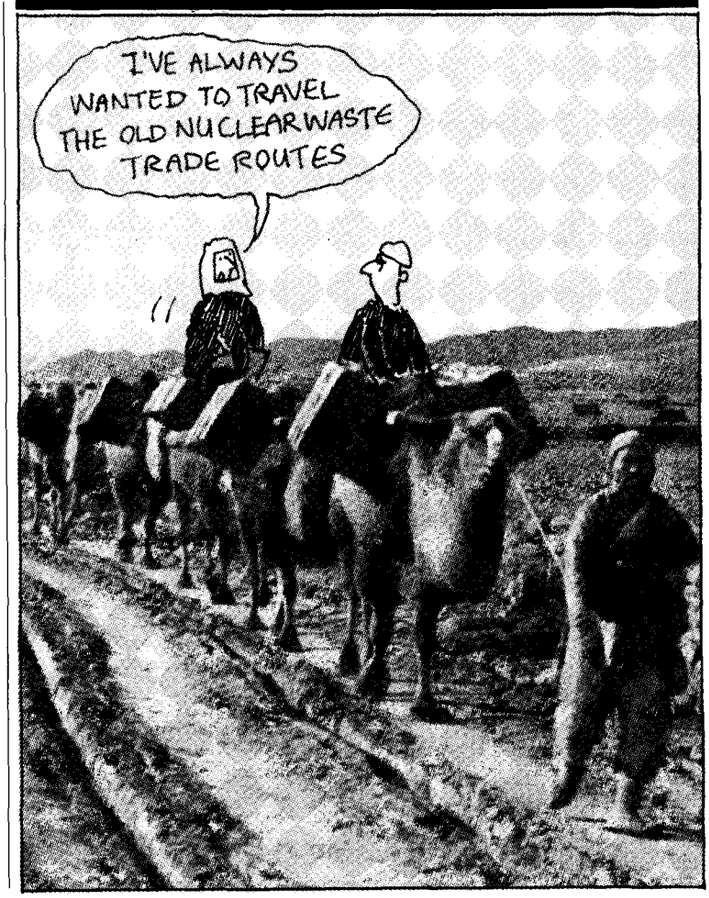
10 Downing Street: My mother made me a Tory/If I gave her the stuffing, would she make me one too?
David Oliver

National Gallery: Piss artists only
Nicholas Hodgson

The Vatican: Contraception is the odium of the papal
New Statesman and Society: Ms de Meaner is a pseudonym
Katie Mallett

No 3136 Set by Ms de Meaner
Wildly amusing and surreal dialogue—which makes an odd kind of sense—between two or more characters where one has travelled a few seconds into the future and is actually answering or responding to the *next* question or remark. No more than 200 words and entries to be in by 26 July.

GRAFFITI BY PAIGE



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CHESS

The main issue at the moment is the struggle for world championship qualification at the Interzonal in Baguio, where the English contenders are Short, Chandler and Adams. Interzonals are savagely competitive events, but let's hope that this one avoids the bitterness of the event for which Baguio City is best known, the worst tempered of all world championship matches, Karpov v Korchnoi 1978.

The happiest legacy of that match is the imaginative piece sacrifice in the Open Ruy that Karpov introduced in the 10th game: **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0–0 Nxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Bb3 d5 8 dxe5 Be6 9 Nbd2 Nc5 10 c3 d4 11 Ng5!?**. This offer is entirely voluntary in both the giving and the receiving. White has a quiet alternative in 11 Bxe6 Nxe6 12 cxd4, while Black can decline, as Korchnoi did, with 11...dxc3 12 Nxe6 fxe6 13 bxc3 Qd3. But, of course, give and take is more interesting. What ought to be the outcome then is still unresolved, the latest contribution coming from **Wolff-Flear** at the Watson, Farley and Williams tournament in April: **11... Qxg5 12 Qf3 Bd7 13 Bxf7+ Ke7 14 Bd5 Nxe5 15 Qe2 d3 16 Qe1 c6 17 f4 Qh6** Here Glenn Flear was relishing the prospect of a massive counterattack after 18 Qxe5+ Kd8 19 Bf3 Bd6. But Patrick Wolff had a big improvement ready to help him on the way to his final GM norm. **18 Bf3!** The main point is that White will capture on e5 with the pawn rather than expose his Queen, since 18...Qxf4 is crushed by 19 Bxc6. **Kd8 19 fxe5 Be7 20 Nb3 Qg6 21 Nd4 Kc7 22 b4 Ne6 23 Be4 Nxd4! 24 cxd4!** Denying Black the chances of 24 Bxg6 Ne2+ 25 Kh1 hxg6 with a threat of... Rxh2+. **Bxb4 25 Qxb4 Qxe4 26 Qd6+ Kc8 27 Bd2 Re8 28 Rf7 Ra7 29 Rc1 Re6 30 Rf8+ Re8 31 e6! Rxf8** 31...Qxe6 32 Qxe6 is good enough, but 32 Rxc6+ Kb7 33 Rb6+ Ka8 34 Qb8+ is more decorative. **32 exd7+ Kb7 33 d8=Q Rxd8 34 Qxd8 1-0**

Meanwhile another tournament, played in Buenos Aires, should not escape notice. The veteran Vasily Smyslov was still sharp enough to share first place with Fernandez. But on this occasion we ought to give pride of place to the exploits of another old campaigner, since the event was held to celebrate the 80th birthday of Miguel Najdorf. Born in Warsaw in April 1910, Najdorf was part of the Polish team that went to the Buenos Aires Olympiad of 1939 and, in view of what was happening in Europe, decided to settle down in Argentina. Through the 1940s and 50s he was undoubtedly one of the world's leading Grandmasters, though his chances of reaching the very highest level were damaged by the lack of international competition in the war years.

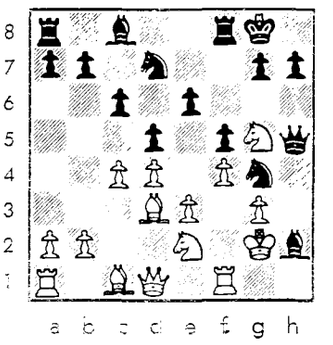
I only played in one tournament with Najdorf, at Hastings 1971–2. He was still a formidable competitor, but somehow I managed to scrape a draw with Miguel in our game. However, he put me firmly in my place with a merciless hammering in a series of five-minute blitzes in the evening. Age might have been against him, but the old fox was a maestro of gamesmanship. At the slightest sign of aggression from my pieces he would start chuckling and mockingly declare "So, he wants to give me mate!" Sure enough, the presumptuous demonstrations would always end in disorderly retreat!

Here is an early example of his tactical wizardry. Given the way his opponent conducts the opening, it is no surprise that Najdorf should win, but the grand manner in which he forces mate is something special.

Glucksberg - Najdorf, Warsaw 1933. Dutch Defence.
1 d4 f5 2 c4 Nf6 3 Nc3 e6 4 Nf3 d5 5 e3 c6 6 Bd3 Bd6 7 0–0 0–0 8 Ne2 Nbd7 9 Ng5? The refutation of this move is pretty obvious. **Bxh2+ 10 Kh1 Ng4 11 f4 Qe8 12 g3 Qh5 13 Kg2** So far, so easy. But maybe White was looking forward to Rh1 and Nf3. *See Diagram* **Bg1! 14 Nxg1 Qh2+ 15 Kf3 e5! 16 dxe5 Ndxe5+ 17 fxe5 Nxe5+ 18 Kf4 Ng6+ 19 Kf3 f4!** If now 20 Bxg6 Bg4+! 21 Kxg4 Qxg3+ 22 Kh5 hxg6+ and mates in two. **20 exf4 Bg4+ 21 Kxg4 Ne5+ 22 fxe5 h5 mate**

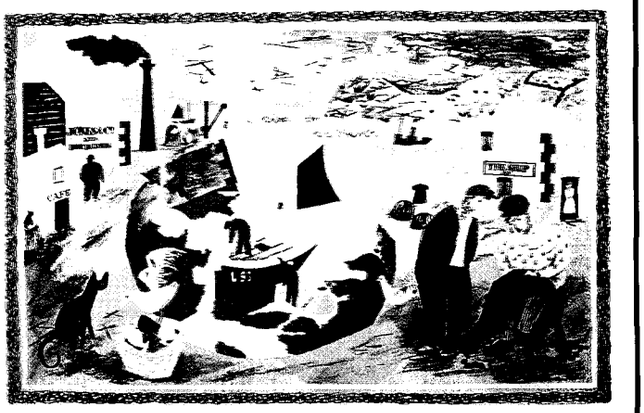
One thing that puzzles me about Najdorf is how he—or any other individual—could possibly have "invented" the variation of the Sicilian Defence that bears his name. Opening monographs provide little enlightenment on this topic, as they tend to be distracted by the task of covering the latest million games played in this enormously popular line. Of all the Najdorfs ever played there is one that everyone should know:

Fischer - Najdorf, Varna 1962. Sicilian Najdorf.
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 h3 b5 6... e6 and 6... g6 are obviously safer, but Najdorf could never resist a challenge. **7 Nd5 Bb7 8 Nxf6+ gxf6 9 c4 bxc4 10 Bxc4 Bxe4 11 0–0 d5 12 Re1 e5 13 Qa4+! Nd7** Fischer's point is that 13...Qd7 14 Bb5 axb5 15 Qxa8 Bd6 16 Rxe4 dxe4 17 Qxe4 gives White domination. **14 Rxe4! dxe4 15 Nf5! Bc5 16 Ng7+ Ke7 17 Nf5+ Ke8 18 Be3 Bxe3 19 fxe3 Qb6 20 Rd1 Ra7 21 Rd6 Qd8 22 Qb3 Qc7 23 Bxf7+ Kd8 24 Be6 1–0** Sorry about that one, Miguel, but at least the loser of such brilliance is in no danger of being forgotten. For example: anyone know any other Glucksberg games?



George Botterill

SCHOOL PRINTS



Harbour — *Julian Trevelyan*

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